

Self-Medication of Multivitamins Among Youth: An Ethnographic Account of Gym



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Final Approval of Thesis

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my parents for their endless love; support and encouragement.

They play the greatest factor in my academic achievements

ABSTRACT

The study investigates the self-medication of multivitamins among the gym going youth. It looks into the interplay between youth's lifestyle with that of use of multivitamins. Anthropological techniques and tools such as participant as observer, rapport building, interview guide and Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) were used to collect data from gym going youth. A purposive sample of 25 respondents of age bracket (18 to 41) based on different class, ethnicity, socio-economic factor, educational backgrounds and age groups is used to collect data from the respondents. The sample includes youngsters (age 18-24), early youth (age 25-34) and older youth (age 35 -41) out of which 13 were females and 12 were males through purposive sampling technique. To get the holistic picture two Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) were also conducted to know gym going youth responses in the presence of each other. The findings of the current study reveal that multivitamins play an important role to enhance the trends associated with the positive body image. Gym going youth own choices and the role of gym trainers have a significant role in the self-medication of multivitamins culture to achieve the desired positive body image among youth of gym. Self-medication of multivitamins also presents by gym going youth as an easy and convenient way to supplement their diet and guarantee their acquisition of necessary vitamins and minerals in a short span of time. The aspects that profoundly played a major role in the self-medication of multivitamins among gym going youth are cultural beliefs, popular culture, influence of media and marketing culture, lifestyle, social norms and peer influences that allow gym going youth to use different multivitamins as a shortcut to gain positive body image.

Keywords: Self-medication, Multivitamin, Supplement, Gym, Lifestyle

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1 INTRODUCTION

Body image is all about the subjective perceptions and evaluation of human physical appearance. Body image shows the internal and external feelings that a person has about their body. Additionally, social and cultural factors also shape one's body image. It includes an individual's sense of beauty within the prevailing society and culture beauty standards. It primarily relates with the concept of attractiveness and how one is perceived as beautiful (Fye, 2012). In contemporary society, individuals are exposed to the widespread belief that what is deemed attractive. It is determined by the standards of how their physique conforms to the existing standard of attractiveness (Fahiz, 2019). The body image features have evolved over time but the features that remain constant include symmetrical facial, youthful appearance and body size (Sarwer, Magee, & Clark, 2003). Likewise, physical characteristics such as fair complexion, shiny hair, bright eyes are signs of attractiveness, while a youthful look is regarded as a crucial factor in determining beauty (Zebrowitz, Olson, & Hoffman, 1993).

In the past, being thin was not always associated with good health. According to (Grogan, 1999), provide a historical account of this idea. At the beginning of 20th century, in the United States and Britain slenderness was linked to poor health due to its correlation with tuberculosis (Soukup & Dvořáková, 2016). Lately, severe thinness is being connected with AIDS¹. In fact, in some African countries, AIDS is referred to as slim (Grogan, 1999). In the late 20th century, the focus shifted to external physical aesthetic within the social and cultural settings. The cultural impacts of this association between thinness and illness in Western industrialized nations become clear over the next decade.

The emergence of social media in this time period, along with the advancement of editing applications and enhancement techniques, have led to a physique defined by augmented breasts and buttocks, paired with a slim curvaceous figure, sun-kissed perfect complexion, and plump lips (Cash & Smolak, 2012). The emergence of slender body shape

¹ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

by Western model Kate Moss influenced beauty standards and hyped fair complexion and androgynous physique (Yang, Koeppel, & Celestino, 2015). Western media not only portray thin bodies but also include the glorification of youthfulness, beauty admiration, the beliefs that the physical appearances can be altered and the concept that taking care of one's body is beneficial. These positive body image features were also adopted by non-Western societies. Girls are frequently confronted with the media's depiction of a perfect woman, who is skinny, passive, explicitly sexual and simultaneously dedicated to both household and professional pursuits (Stephens, Hill, & Hanson, 1994). Women are inundated with the notion of desirability and a flawless physique so persistently that these depictions become their perception of beauty, finally becoming an aspiration. The depiction of males suggests that those who are overweight have a lower chance of socializing with companions and lovers (Dittmar & Howard, 2004).

Beauty standards are also influenced from the colonial time where being beautiful meant having fair complexion, bright eyes, long hair and slim figure. Lean and sculpted portrayal of men along with classic faded crew cut hairstyle constantly seen in the modern media. The development of body shaping among adolescent boys has gained more attention and recognition since the 1990s. However, boys tend to have a wider choice of conventional body aims and their body ideals. The purposes include increasing body mass or building muscle and shedding weight (Alchin, 2012).

The perfect physique during 1980s was athletic, tall figure with toned arms (Lawson, 1985). Slim bodies were also highlighted with the increase in workout and aerobics videos (Yang, Koeppel, & Celestino, 2015). According to some experts, due to extensive exercise this period also witnessed anorexia (Edwards, 2016) as people got more conscious about their body image.

In the 1960s, harmony, affection and slim physique appeared to be the slogan of perfect beauty. The thriving fashion and cultural scene of London also impacted girl's attire and fashion in America during the same era (Tejani, 2021). The youthful silhouette did not last for a prolonged duration. The shapely physique is making resurgence. The perfect

woman is depicted as having an hourglass figure, curves, slim waist, and a large breast during the 1950s (Havlin & Báez, 2018).

Gym culture plays a significant role in constructing the idealized and desired body images of people. Gym culture also embraces fitness and body shaping and encourages people to prioritize their appearance and body image. It also reflects the contemporary ideas about body image, beauty and health that are shaped by the cultural narratives, societal values and media representations. The gym culture provides a controlled and structured environment where gym going youth shape and transform their bodies according to their desires. Gyms consist of various equipments and wide range of exercise machines that allow gym going youth to work on specific area of their bodies they want to shape.

However, the standards of beauty have altered over time and across culturally. In Pakistan, due to the influence of westernization and globalization, the positive body image criteria are also set by Pakistani society. In traditional and non-Western society's characteristics like sexuality, reproduction and attractiveness were associated with plumpness (Brown, 1991). In some culture, women are expected to gain excessive weight, especially before marriage. A plump physique was considered attractive, and obesity was not only appreciated but also regarded as secondary sex characteristic (Conner, Johnson, & Grogan, 2004). Conversely, a prevalent inclination towards a slender physique has been acknowledged as a norm, predominantly in Pakistani society.

In Pakistan, non-conformity with the slender ideal results in a range of negative social consequences. Being overweight, for both genders is viewed as bodily unattractive and associated with negative traits. Body image pertains to the physical appearance of both genders and the societal expectations placed upon them. However, feminists argue that women face more pressure than men regarding their body image. The terms associated with body image such as pleasure, achievement, youthfulness and social acceptability, reinforce the concepts. Those who do not conform to the ideal body image are often labeled as lazy, lacking in strength of will and out of control. Individuals who do not conform to the ideal body image face discrimination throughout their lives (Bordo & Green, 1994).

The issue of weight loss and weight gain and physical appearance is not exclusive to women; women are expected to have a slender and hourglass body, symmetrical face features, bright eyes, fair complexion, younger look, and shiny hair while men are expected to be thin, smooth skin, semi-nude form and moderately muscular. Body image is also closely related to the facial beauty, positive body image, impression of attractiveness, health, identity, gender, socio-economic and class status. Significant benefits are bestowed upon individuals who fulfill the beauty standards established for an appealing individual. They receive preferential treatment, employment opportunities, and are regarded as more intelligent; better, more content, socially adept, and accomplished (Husain & Gulzar, 2015). The study examines that how gym youth in Pakistan fulfill the physical beauty standards and body aesthetics that are set by the society for various purposes. This research set up to covers the gym going youth perspectives of body image and the use of multivitamins as self-medication to achieve their body goals and the role of self-medication culture in the over use of multivitamins.

The negative feedback regarding physical attributes is also faced by people that resort to painful surgeries and extreme diets in order to attain idealized body image. In the pursuit of a good physique, individuals now used different methods including the utilization of anabolic steroids, multivitamins, dietary supplements and professional bodybuilding. Nowadays, youth are depending on multivitamins supplements, nutrition experts, personal trainers, and their assistance to attain their desired body shapes and well-being. Hence, this ethnographic research aims to investigate all such social and cultural beauty standards that encourage gym going youth to gain positive body image and to self-medicate with multivitamins.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Human beings are always attracted towards beautiful things, but the desire to appear with positive body image is a popular culture now a day. Although, media platforms have facilitated global connectivity among people it has also set beauty standards for males and females. Different form of media including print, electronic and mass media plays an

important role in creating a popular culture through variety of mediums including television, internet, social media, digital media, advertisements and magazines (Hughes & Lock, 1987).

Thin and captivating models communicate the way a human body looks like. These beauty standards also impact on the certain roles including lifestyles, job, marriages, marital status, interactions and general acceptance. But, how the media influence people to make their bodies acceptable, appealing and desirable to other? How the certain beauty standards of influencers, celebrities, actor, actresses and models impact people choices?

Construction of beauty standards in the society and the adaptation of gym culture develop an importance to meet these standards. These standards not only deal with hair, fair complexion, facial characteristics but also with the size and shape of the body. It also indicates that the body of a person is not a personal matter but it also depicts that how we represent ourselves to others (Henriques & Patnaik, 2020). But, how a person can meet those cultural beauty standards? At the same time, how to enhance the beauty of the body? Different form of ways including cosmetics, skin-brightening creams, hair transplant, botox treatment, and surgeries including liposuction are the common methods that people considered make them beautiful and attractive. But, what about the use of multivitamins as self-medication to gain positive body image? For this reason, the study is designed to explore why gym going youth is using multivitamins as a shortcut?

For gaining an in-depth understanding the present ethnographic study examines the perspectives of gym going youth to know their criteria of positive good image that is constructed and transmitted within a society, as well as the cultural beliefs about the use of multivitamins as a shortcut way to achieve their desired bodily demands.

1.2 Research Objectives

The following objectives were used

1. To examine the perception of youth about multivitamins.
2. To understand the nature and extent of multivitamins among youth.

3. To look into the role of self-medication culture in the over use of multivitamins among youth.
4. To explore the relationship between lifestyle and multivitamins intake of youth.

1.3 Definitions of Key Terms

1.3.1 Self-Medication

Self-medication is a common practice worldwide. (Keche et al., 2012) defined self-medication as the practice of self-diagnosis and self-treatment with a range of treatments such as medicines, herbs, natural medicines and home remedies. The research study emphasizes that self-medication is prevalent in Pakistani society and is influenced by cultural beliefs, social norms and healthcare accessibility. It takes into account gym participants who practice self-medication of multivitamins and are influenced by their surroundings to obtain their desired body image.

1.3.2 Multivitamins

Multivitamins comprises of a combination of vitamins and minerals in various forms and dosages to assist individuals in meeting their daily nutrient intakes (Wallace, McBurney, & Fulgoni, 2014). They are widely used as a way to promote general health and fitness. Their purpose is to offer an easy method of ensuring that the body receives the necessary nutrients for optimal functioning. Although, some multivitamins may comprise additional components such as antioxidants or herbs, their primary objective is to supplement the diet with crucial vitamins and minerals. Multivitamins among gym going youth are considered as a culturally constructed product that reflects beliefs and attitudes about health, wellness and nutrition in a gym culture. Multivitamins is viewed as a method by gym going youth to optimize their workout and accomplish their body image.

1.3.3 Supplements

Supplements are products that provide a diverse range of vitamins, minerals, amino and fatty acids, as well as plant and herbal extract with nutritional properties that are used to supplement the daily diet (Wierzejska, 2021). These products are designed to supply particular essential elements that are insufficiently present in the daily food intake or to boost various factors of wellbeing, such as immunity, heart health, or cognitive acuity.

Certain supplements may also be promoted for shedding pounds, enhancing athletic performance, or other objectives. Gym going youth at the gym used supplements and multivitamins as a single category, both of which are used to get vitamins and minerals.

1.3.4 Gym

(Paoli & Bianco, 2015) define gymnasium that is also called gym is a place where people participate in physical training and fitness activities. It usually has a range of exercise equipments, such as weight machines, cardio machines, and free weights, as well as room for group exercise courses and personal training sessions. (Morrison, Gizis, & Shorter, 2004) investigates that how the gym serves as a cultural production site, where meanings are formed and negotiated via interactions between people, equipment and space. They contend that the gym is a reflection of greater cultural trends towards individualism, consumerism, and the medicalization of daily life and that it reflects deeply ingrained cultural beliefs about the body, gender, and social position. The research study sees gym as a culturally constructed environment that reflects wider beliefs about health, fitness and the body in a society. The gym is considered as a place for youth empowerment and self-improvement, where gym going youth concentrate on shaping their bodies and enhancing their general health and physique.

1.3.5 Lifestyle

A lifestyle is a set of behaviors, patterns, and decisions that influence a person's everyday existence and general health. It includes a variety of variables such as diet, physical exercise, stress control, sleeping patterns and social contacts (Farhud, 2015). The research study considers lifestyle to be a socially and culturally created phenomenon influenced by cultural beliefs and social norms. The lifestyle of gym going youth is not only determined by individual action, but also by cultural and societal factors. Gym going youth view their lifestyle, such as diet and physical activity, exercise, use of multivitamins to be critical components of their fitness objectives and positive body image.

1.3.6 Nutrients

Nutrients are substances that support the body for nourishment and are required for tissue repairing, care and healing. They are categorized into six major elements: carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals and water (Finamore, Benvenuti, Santis, Cinti, & Rossi,

2022). The research study reflects that gym going youth considered the use of multivitamins supplements as regaining all the nutrients that they drop after workout.

1.3.7 Exercise

Exercise can be defined as physical activity that is planned, structured and repetitive for the purpose of improving or maintaining physical fitness and health. This can include activities such as jogging, cycling, swimming, weightlifting and yoga (Caspersen, Powell, & Christenson, 1985). The research study provides insight into how physical activity is valued, practiced and understood among gym going youth. It is also linked to social, gender roles and cultural beliefs about health and body image. Gym people define exercise as workout and to gain perfect body image.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Many studies on multivitamins, gym, beauty, person appearances have been conducted that mainly discuss the cause and effects of multivitamins and other factors of self-medication in society. However, this is an ethnographic study and the researcher conducted fieldwork to understand the culture of gym and how the physical appearance of gym going respondents influenced their perception about an aesthetically presentable body image. It is significant in providing subjective and comprehensive insights into how fitness enthusiasts are embracing multivitamins as an easy and convenient way to gain their desired body goals. The research also provides valuable information at grass root level for students and academia, Health Department, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and local community to address self-medication of multivitamin among gym going youth.

For students and academia this ethnographic study will help students to understand the impression of body aesthetic among gym going youth who are influenced by their socio-cultural context and consume multivitamins in their local context. Moreover, aesthetic is a relative term and in the existing literature the definition of body aesthetic changes in this modern time as it relates with the multivitamins. It also provides true literature and insight to coming generation.

The use of multivitamins also had adverse effects on the respondent's health. The researcher also added some case studies in which some of gym going youth health broke down because of the overuse of multivitamins and some do not get their desirable results. Systematically, for health department this research helps the policy makers to formulate health related policies accordingly.

Researcher has the primary experience to collect primary data from the respondents of the gym. Based on the experiential knowledge all the young generation enjoys the gym to shape their bodies and they will also learn from the previous experiences of the gym respondents.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) often work with the communities that have different cultural beliefs and practices around health and wellness. This research can provide insight into the cultural beliefs and practices that influence health seeking behaviors in a community. NGOs can use this information to design interventions that are culturally appropriate and respect local norms and values.

For local community this research has provided voices to gym-goers to reach healthcare providers. It helps participants to express their local and cultural expressions about the self-medication of multivitamins.

1.5 Thesis Outline

The first chapter explains the topic of the research with the historical background. It mentions the statement of the problem that why this research is conducted. Then, it explains the research objectives and the significance of the research that how the current research is helpful for students and academia, Health Department, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and local community to make policies by keeping in mind the use of multivitamins as self-medication among gym going youth to achieve their desired body image. This chapter also explains the two theoretical frameworks to support the arguments.

The second chapter is all about literature review. It describes the conceptualization of various terms then it also documents all relevant literature by making various themes and subthemes about the use of multivitamins as self-medication among gym going youth to gain positive body image in their cultural context.

Third chapter is all about research methodology that explains the detailed locale setting where research was conducted and the selection and utilization of various research methods that are used during fieldwork to collect the data.

The fourth, fifth and sixth chapter were generated based on the various themes and subthemes that deals with the analysis and findings of the research. The fourth chapter deals with the multivitamins and popular culture. It describes the understanding of multivitamins by gym going youth that how they perceive multivitamins. It also explains the nature and extent of the multivitamins that which type of multivitamins gym going youth used and to which extent they utilize various multivitamins and their purpose. It further elaborates the influence of popular culture on constructing the perspectives of gym going youth about multivitamins.

The fifth chapter deals with the gym culture of body shaping and the use of multivitamins. Different themes and subthemes are made that describes how social and cultural factors constructs the views of gym going youth about body shaping and how that body goals motivate them to achieve their desired goals through the use of various multivitamins supplements.

Sixth chapter deals with the better lifestyle and the use of multivitamins among gym going youth. It elaborates the factors that contribute in the lifestyle of gym going youth to make their daily life better. It also discusses the use of various multivitamins supplements by gym going youth for their mental health and stress free lifestyle. It also talks about role of gym trainers and the use of multivitamins supplements by gym going youth as self-medication.

Seventh chapter presents a detailed summary and conclusion of the research. It summarizes the whole thesis from first chapter to the last chapter. It further explains the conclusion in which the unique findings of the research are explained.

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the comprehensive literature on self-medication with a particular emphasis on social and cultural factors in shaping gym going youth's perspectives about the use of multivitamins in South Asia, Pakistan and more specifically, Punjab. It begins with the review of literature is divided into headings and sub headings. The reviews literature starts from the gym culture then the concept of body image in cultural context and then in print and electronic media. Furthermore, it reviews literature on popular culture then on advertisement of beauty products and body aesthetic. Then, it reviews literature on role of multivitamins in gym culture and its availability. Finally, it reviews literature on diet and exercise.

2.1 Gym Culture

Gym culture in Pakistan can be seen as a reflection of contemporary Western values and lifestyles, as well as a response to the health challenges posed by modern working and living conditions. The gym represents a space where individuals can work on their physical health and fitness goals, which is seen as an important aspect of personal success and achievement. In Pakistan, the gym culture has been expanding rapidly in recent decades. Initially, gyms were not in high demand and physical wellbeing was not a top priority for most individuals. According to (Bavel et al., 2020) the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on gym culture. (Kaur, Singh, Arya, & Mittal, 2020) identified that during the lockdown, with many gyms closed exercising regular at home with virtual classes proved to be extremely beneficial for people in terms of dealing with mental health and physical fitness. Nevertheless, with the rising consciousness of health and fitness, the fitness culture in Pakistan has observed substantial advancement. These activities were seen as not only promoting positive body image (Johansson, 1996) but also making the use of multivitamins supplements essential for gym going youth.

Gym culture is a global phenomenon that originated in Western society but has now expanded to numerous regions across the globe. The United States served as the center for the advancement of physical culture and the creation of new methods to nurture a healthy, strong, muscular and masculine body (Becic, 2017). The Young Men's Christian Association

(YMCA) played a major role in promoting physical fitness by establishing gymnasiums and providing classes and activities to the general public, in the United States. Throughout the 20th century, 4,500 gyms linked to this organization (Reich, 2008).

(Andreasson & Johansson, 2014) while talking about the history of the gym, point out that the practices and beliefs around physical fitness and exercise during 19th century laid the foundation for the evolution of gym culture in the centuries to come. At the beginning of the 19th century, physical fitness was primarily seen as a means of improving military readiness and promoting discipline and obedience (Stern, 2011). During this era, the initial “gymnasiums” or “gymnasia” were founded in Europe mainly for the purpose of military training (McIntosh, 1984, p.82). These gymnasia were frequently large open spaces that equipped with a variety of apparatus such as dumbbells, parallel bars and pommel horses. The emphasis was mainly on exercises to enhance muscular strength and stamina, as well as gymnastics.

The official gym center was first discovered in ancient Greece. Gymnasium was identified as Zurkhaneh, a place that supports physical fitness. The phrase “gymnasium” originated from the Greek term “gymnos” that means naked. Gyms were designated for the physical education, swimming and studying for young people. The gymnasiums of ancient Greece were utilized for the training of athletes for communal competitions like Olympics (Johansson, 1996).

As the centuries passed, the significance of physical fitness increased for the common people beyond just those serving in the armed forces. There has been a significant increase in the amount of commercial fitness centers, exclusive fitness clubs, franchise networks, global fitness publications and skilled coaches (Matuszak, 2021). As per the International Health, Racquet & Sports Club Association (IHRSA) (2013) report, an organization provide the health and fitness club industry, this worldwide movement produced approximately \$75.7 billion earnings in 2012, over 153,000 health clubs served 131.7 million members. In the United Kingdom, participation in private fitness clubs has grown progressively; public survey reveals that 14% of the population visited gym (Crossley, 2006). These statistics are consistent with those of the health club populace in the United States and appear to be steadily increasing worldwide (Lembo, 2014).

Scientists from various countries focused their attention on physical culture and education, drawing inspiration from the gymnastics movements of Germany, Sweden and Denmark to develop approaches to enhance body fitness and muscle. The emphasis on body fitness and muscle was linked to the advent of fitness industrialization and the necessity of physically male capable bodies. As a result, sports and physical culture gradually gained popularity among the working class in addition to the elite classes. This trend was especially prevalent in authoritarian states such as Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union (Grant, 2013).

German born, Eugene Sandow was one of the most prominent and influential figures in the realm of physical culture during the early 1900s. Sandow initially made a name as a strongman, touring with various circuses and vaudeville shows. During this time, he collaborated with Professor Attila, a physical education instructor and they revolutionized weight training and muscle development. Sandow's well defined physique gain significant attention during his tours in the United States and he gradually gained widespread fame. Sandow's fame coincided with the advent of modern photography, resulting in numerous postcards featuring his likeness and his half naked body was captured in photos that were widely disseminated across different nations. Sandow was also involved in a broader advancement in the field of physical fitness as he travelled around the world to convey his methods of physical fitness and the lifestyle concept. He faces no obstruction to pass on the concept of physical culture in countries like India and South Africa as he found great similarities in the physical characteristics around the globe (Lindsey, 2016).

At the end of 19th century, there was also transformation in the trend as women's fitness publications emerged and there was an increasing fascination in aerobics and collective (Johansson & Johansson, 1995). Another noteworthy personality for the early progress on bodybuilding was Charles Atlas, who obtained recognition by generating and advertising a particular workout procedure for bodybuilding (Kimmel, 1996). He believed that physical fitness and bodybuilding were crucial components of the country's liberation. The initial advancements within physical fitness were because of the Sandow and Atlas who paved the way for the bodybuilding subculture. (Wellman, 2020) pointed out that as fashion evolved, with its origins linked to specific eras, locations and regions such as Paris, New York and

Milan similarly gym culture progressed in both time and place, starting from the Nordic countries and Europe before reaching the United States.

Joe Gold's Gym Business and California became the hub of bodybuilding and fitness. Another hub emerged simultaneously in Montreal, Canada, where Joe Weider and Ben Weider established their worldwide bodybuilding empire (Fair, 2023). The Weider brothers played a significant role in the globalization of fitness and gym culture through publications, organizing bodybuilding competitions and founding the International Federation of Bodybuilders (IFBB). The number of member associations worldwide increased consistently, resulting in a membership of over 100 (Andreasson, 2014). The number of individuals entering gyms has grown over time and gyms are becoming more popular with each passing decade (Hmar, 2014).

2.1.1 Body Image in Cultural Context

In Pakistan, globalization and the influence of Western culture is the significant reason why people in developing countries are increasingly worried about their appearance and want to be thin. The concept of a perfect and fit body is more pervasive and rigid for women than for men. Females bodies are more evaluated as compared to males. Individuals who internalized socio-cultural body shaping values are more likely to be dissatisfied with their bodies and indulge in excessive body shaping behaviors. Traditionally, Pakistani women were primarily concerned with their families and society, showing little or no interest in their body image. However, this is no longer the case. Due to westernization both males and females are now adopting bodily grooming practices (Abideen, Latif, Khan, & Farooq, 2011).

Feminist discussions regarding the body encompass the concepts that the body is not solely a biological construct but is influenced by culture, and that culture molds bodies to maintain the status (Murnen & Don, 2012). In contrast to boys, young girls express a more desire for being thin. Young boys who are unsatisfied with their body size, they are divided between those who aim to be more muscular and larger, and those who wish to be thinner (Cash, 2004).

In contemporary societies, body image has evolved as a project (Giddens, 1991). The body image is nurtured in various places, such as the gym, fitness center that is the primary focus of this research. Youth who devote a significant amount of time in the gym have established a certain way of life, preference, taste and a specific approach associated with the body image. (Wolf, 1991) discovered into the book “The Beauty Myth”, revealing how women have come to despise their bodies due to their inability to attain the self-styled great body image, leading to a fear of being rejected. According to (Cash, 1990) stereotyping physical size generates images of overweight and thin women. The significance of being slim for good health and the negative impact of being overweight is also emphasized by biological arguments but the preference for a slim body image has become a global phenomenon and is now almost uniform across all cultures (Foote, 2003).

According to (Etcoff, 1999), body image encompasses characteristics that provide delight to the senses or raise the understanding. Body aesthetic is evoked by attractive things and it can be interpreted in variety of ways as well as it could be more or less in intensity. It is not only concerned with the construction of a body image aimed at capturing the observer’s interest but there is also aspect known as the enjoyment derived from the aesthetic practices. Body image also plays a role in establishing gender, socio-economic class and societal position. As a result, social interactions and cultural classifications all play a part in shaping body image standards that ultimately result in the production of appearance in every possible way (Peiss, 2000). Body holds great significance as it impacts everyday existence and individuals tend to evaluate themselves and others based on their perception of an ideal body image. People are increasingly judged by their appearance rather than their actions (Bakewell, Mitchell, & Rothwell, 2006).

During the period of globalization, the concerns about body image have disseminated throughout the globe. Body varies across different regions of the world because each culture has its own idea of what is beautiful and practices for changing the body. Anthropologically, body image is also important to study as it depends on how people think about their bodies in different cultures (Matuszak, 2021).

Body image in the cultural context is observed in different Western countries, as well as comparing Western and non-Western countries because westernization have strong influence on Pakistani culture. Black American women are a group of people who are often not unhappy with their bodies. In the United States, black women usually have bigger bodies compared to white women. However, they tend to be happier with the way their bodies look. A study that is done by the analysis between 1960 and 2004 found that Black women generally feel happier with their bodies compared to White or Hispanic women (Kronenfeld, Harrelson, Holle, Reyes, & Bulik, 2010).

The differences in body ideals are often thought to be because of differences in body mass index (BMI). Weight is the most accurate and strong indicator of body image. Weight status is determined by using the body mass index (BMI), that takes into account a person's weight and height. It is calculated by the person's weight that is divided by their square height. People who are overweight or obese tend to have a negative perception of their bodies compared to people who have an average weight. Moreover, this connection has been proven to be the same for both males and females of all ages. Black people in the US are more likely to be very overweight as compared to White people. But, people believe that family and friends can protect us from cultural messages that promote the idea of being thin. A study in 2009 conducted by (Granberg, Gordon Simons, & Simons, 2009) discovered that receiving more compliments about one's appearance from family and friends was linked to feeling more at ease with having a bigger body size. Overweight and obese individuals have poorer body image than average weight individuals, with obese individuals having an even poorer body image than overweight individuals. Furthermore, this relationship has been found to be consistent across gender and age (Tatangelo, McCabe, & Ricciardelli, 2015).

In Hispanic communities, people are more accepting of different body images compared to White communities. Hispanic women think the best body image is being slim with curves in certain places like the breasts, buttocks, and hips. Conversely, studies that have looked at how often Hispanics and Whites feel unhappy with their bodies have found mixed results. Some research shows that Hispanic girls and women feel better about their bodies and worry less about their weight compared to White girls and women. Other research has

discovered that both Hispanic and White girls and women feel equally unhappy. Hispanic males and White males have similar thoughts about their bodies including lean, broad shoulders and muscular body image. There is no significant difference between the two groups (Ricciardelli, McCabe, Lillis, & Thomas, 2006).

Non-Western cultures prefer having a bigger body shape, while Western cultures focus on being thin. (McCabe et al., 2011) study to see how people feel about their bodies found that people in advance socioeconomic countries, like those with Western culture, tend to view a slimmer body shape as more desirable. In countries with less money and development, people think that larger body image is better for women because it shows that they are rich, good social status, able to have babies, and attractive in a sexual way.

Nicole Sault, a cultural anthropologist, influentially argues that the development of body image is influenced by both self-assessment and the judgments of others. Sault emphasizes that we are “social mirrors to each other,” and rely on the feedback and reactions of those around us to determine our appearance and identity (Sault, 1996). Socializing agents like parents, friends, family and relatives play a role on conveying the messages related to the body image of a person. Usually, the way body image of girls’ look is given a lot of focus and pressure in society to make sure they fit in and avoid being rejected or made fun of. Additionally, young men are often shown as slim, tall, and strong, wide shoulders and a narrow waist, creating a V-shape. It also includes having visible abdominal muscles, commonly referred to as a six and eight-pack abs ((Sklar, 2015).

2.1.2 Body Image in Print and Electronic Media

Body image thoughts about how a person looks are affected by many things, both from inside and from the world around. One of the main things that affect how a person feels about the bodies is what is portrayed in the media. Whether it is print media of electronic media (magazines or Television (TV)), it conveys the ideal body image, shape and size. This can make people of all ages and genders feel bad about them, and can cause problems like eating disorders, low self-confidence, stress, and conflicts with how to make the lifestyle better.

According to (Guðnadóttir & Garðarsdóttir, 2014) body dissatisfaction has been a common issue among girls and boys for decades. Prevailing cultural norms about gender specific, body shape is a source of body dissatisfaction and imply that women want to be slim and men want to be muscular. These body concepts among men and women are often referred to as perfect body. Socio-cultural pressure on women to attain thin body is well known feature over centuries. Media images of models and actors play a key role in perpetuating and maintain the thin body for women and muscularity for men.

Mass media including television, magazines, and music videos refers to forms communication that can reach a large number of people in the modern times. It is used to build people's opinions and behaviors about the perfect body image of male and female. Images depicted in these media promote the belief that having a thin body is the only way to look attractive. The link between seeing perfect body images in the media and feeling unhappy with your own body applies to both men and women. (Galioto & Crowther, 2013) found that women felt worse about their bodies when they looked at pictures of thin models, compared to average sized or plus sized models. Magazines and TV make women believe that being very thin is the most ideal and beautiful body type. (Blond, 2008) conducted a study that looked at how a men image of muscular men in the media affects men to feel about their bodies. She found that looking at pictures of perfect looking men made men feel worse about their own bodies, but this effect was not very strong. However, it tends to affect women a bit more than men. Lots of women and men like to look at perfect body pictures on TV and magazines.

Additionally, the idea of physical appearance is also reinforced by the promotion of beauty contests, which establish specific requirements for height and weight (Mazur, 1986). Research on magazines indicates that fashion models have progressively become slimmer from the 1960s to the 1980s (Fallon & Rozin, 1985). The social context of physical gratification has been proven by exemplifying how body satisfaction differs among social groups. Various social groups' data has revealed that the identical physical shape could be viewed in a more or less positively based on the social group and sexual category of the observer. An individual's physical self-perception is not established by the factual shape and

size of their body, but rather by that person's personal assessment of what it implies to possess that particular kind of body within their specific society (Grogan, 1999).

Women often desire to have a specific appearance for two main reasons. One they want to match what they believe is considered attractive by others, and second they want to resemble what they think the average person looks like. Therefore, magazines and television not only serve as sources for internalizing the idea of thin models but have also transformed cultural body image (Thompson & Stice, 2001). The distribution and transmission of magazines have increased in recent years, particularly among females who seek to stay informed on prettiness, health and grooming products (Tiggemann, 2003). The local population's perception of body image, dressing practice, living styles and buying activities has been impacted by this trend (Kamran, 2008).

The creation of beauty standards is not limited to the media at times even toys can also contribute to the formation of an ideal image. (Urla & Swedlund, 1995) investigate how the Barbie doll has been standardized and idealized by young females, promoting a perfect image of a slim, white and twenty years old lady.

2.2 Popular Culture

Popular culture also known as pop culture is strongly connected with media (Tiggemann & Zaccardo, 2015). The things that become famous because of the popular culture are called as mediatized source of popular culture (Hepp, Hjarvard, & Lundby, 2010). This includes movies, television and advertisements etc. Media use is connected to how society modifies and form popular culture related to body images (Hjarvard, 2014). Popular culture is mainly the effective way to influence people. Popular culture encourages people to get along with others in a society. It affects people and transport new fashion to culture, which leads to societal changes (Hollander, 2010). Popular culture has a significant impact on body image due to the representation of thin celebrities and models in the media. In recent times, popular culture has developed a sense among youth to feel unsure about their bodies and become more insecure. Recently, youth wish to have a flawless body and do diet and exercise all in hope to resemble most famous celebrity (Rafique, Khan, & Bilal, 2022).

Social media sites are different from TV, movies, and magazines because they want the user to participate and be more involved. Modern media platforms are altering how individuals perceive ideals of beauty, how they attempt to manage how others perceive them, and how they receive comments on their appearance. Because there are many different ways for people to use the internet, like looking at social media, leaving comments on posts, seeing who else likes or comments on posts, or sharing their own content, it affects ideas of beauty (Tiggemann & Slater, 2013).

Beauty advertisements show up on popular media then it gets the public attention and want people to spend money. Beauty advertisements always target women because beauty is more related to women than to men. Cosmetics advertisement always depicts that women will look prettier if they use their beauty products. Consumers follow the advertisement and not consider if a product is worth buying or if it is suitable for them (Gurari, Hetts, & Strube, 2006).

Conversely, communication psychology has a strong effect on how men and women think and understand the advertisement of beauty products. It can help capture people's attention and make them focus on certain things more than others. This means that when people pay more attention to the products being sold, their opinion will improve. Apart from thinking and understanding, popular culture also affects emotions and feelings of a person that how someone acts in their community. According to (Jackson, 2011) movies have a significant impact on the idealization of body images. Movies convey the body image that what it means to be male or female. (Khan, Khalid, Khan, & Jabeen, 2011) executed a research with university scholars to evaluate the influence of media on the physical appearance of 784 University scholars in the perspective of Pakistan. The research verified the inclination of the media to have a comprehensive pessimistic impact on individuals' physical appearance. A remarkable characteristic was that pessimistic physical appearance dissatisfaction was discovered to be more widespread in males as compared to females. Similarly, optimistic physical appearance dissatisfaction scores were more widespread amongst females. The influence of the media on people's perception of body image has risen extensively, leading to a surge in the quantity and frequency of diet

associated advertisements in television and magazines both in the United States (Bianco et al., 2011) and globally.

2.2.1 Advertisements of Beauty Products

The beauty products are all about the cosmetics and medicines. With the advancement in technology the advertisement of these beauty products promote good health, positive bodily appearance, younger look and the enhancement in facial beauty. Beauty advertisements can be found everywhere in the world. It appears that the message is simply about encouraging people to purchase beauty items. Regardless of their age, everyone wants to appear attractive. Youth are more interested to know that what is new in the category of beauty products because they believe that new things are better because of the values of modern times (Frith, Shaw, & Cheng, 2005).

Today, even in Pakistan there are varieties of beauty products including cosmetics, multivitamins supplements that specifically deal with the hair, skin, nails and body appearance. Advertisement of these beauty products are found everywhere online. Using modern research techniques, advertisers and marketing researchers see which group of people is purchasing a certain product. With the help of that information, beauty product including cosmetics and multivitamins companies figure out what makes that group of people interested in the product, like the name, the way it looks and what is in it.

In the past ten years, the demand for vitamins, minerals, natural and botanical supplements have risen significantly, resulting in the opening of numerous new companies in the market. The beauty products industry is a very successful industry. In 2015, it made \$56.2 billion in the United States, and in Europe, it was worth around 69 billion Euros in 2014 (Ketabchi, 2019). Non-scientific publications, magazines, television programs, social and digital media and news pieces that focus on health appear to have a significant influence on consumer choices. The internet is also a crucial platform that is contributing to the rapid expansion of the multivitamins supplements and cosmetics industry (Papanicolas, Woskie, & Jha, 2018).

According to (Augustine, 2020), the advertisement of cosmetics is also highly influenced by the development of internet in the past decades. Online advertising has changed a lot over time. Almost half of the people in the world use the web to see the beauty products and people of all age groups are associated to the internet. Its main purpose is to grow the business on large scale. The effectiveness of advertising beauty products depends on convincing customers that the product can make them look better (Fowler, Reisenwitz, & Carlson, 2015). Various ways are used by the companies that deal with beauty products to convince people to buy things. Brand association is one of the techniques that link the product with the emotions of the people and try to make people have certain feelings towards it (Yu, Damhorst, & Russell, 2011). Many people know that appearance have a significant effect on how other treat them. Advertising take advantage of it by using it to influence the targeted market. It depicts in a way that everything is affordable, and simple to use. It also provides opportunities to all the beauty products small and big companies to depict their products in an effective way (Suttle, 2019).

According to (Moraes, Gountas, Gountas, & Sharma, 2019), beauty products claims that they can make people look younger and beautiful. Beauty products usually do not have much to do with the actual product. The makeup is often more attention grabbing than the product being sold. Cosmetics advertisements sell beauty products and also make people feel good about them. This is another vital reason why celebrities are showing up more often in commercials for beauty products. According to (Baker & Churchill, 1977), celebrities symbolize their most incredible selves, being very attractive and loved by millions of people. After people read and evaluate advertisements for beauty products, they might become worried about how they look and begin searching for similar items to make them look more appealing, just like celebrities.

Advertising has a big impact on society and it shapes the people behavior (Apriliana, 2019). People not only want to appear good but also feel good. Consumers hope that products will improve their appearance, making them look better than before. They might even think that using these products will make them as attractive as the models who promote them. So, advertisers use those popular words to get the attention of lots of people

and expand their marketing to target new generation and attract a variety of consumers (O'Dowd, 2012).

According to (Sooke, 2016), the concept of beauty is very old. It is started long ago in Ancient Egypt, where people, both men and women, used nice smelling oils to make their skin clean and smooth. After that, the Ancient Egyptians started mixing spice powders, nuts, and metals together to make something like makeup for their faces. They used to burn various types of nuts like almonds and combine them with copper and other things to make a substance called "kohl" that was used by women to enhance their eyes. Ancient Chinese painted their nails, and other ancient civilizations used powders, such as rice powder or chalk, to make their faces look smooth and even. Later on, these homemade face powders and eye makeup became the beauty products that are used by people all over the world for decorating their faces and bodies.

2.2.2 Body Aesthetics

Body aesthetic means how people thinks, experience and perform action about his body appearance. Modern aesthetic of body is the representation of body according to the modern values that are prevailing in culture (Feng, 2020). Features such as youthful appearance deemed as a crucial factor in determining beauty that relate to physical characteristics (Zebrowitz, Olson, & Hoffman, 1993). It is a fact that in Western societies, beauty is frequently associated with femininity, but European writers often suggest that the focus on male appearance may be viewed as less socially acceptable. Nonetheless, it is equally noteworthy as a male psychological trait. The body and facial aesthetic includes muscular body for men and slim body for women. The facial characteristics include having a smooth jaw line, no wrinkles on the forehead, a nose that looks the same on sides, volume lips and cheeks that are plump and lifted has now gained widespread cultural significance (Bordo & Green, 1994).

Both men and women are influenced by these facial features and these expressions also results in physical attractiveness and body aesthetic. In the last 20 years, people who want to look better are not happy with their body image. In the 20th century, due to the emergence of media, the focus shifted from an individual's intrinsic qualities to their external physical aesthetic within their socio-cultural settings (Cash & Smolak, 2012).

According to (Sarwer, Crerand, & Magee, 2010), in contemporary society, people have started to understand more about how different medical treatments help them to gain body aesthetic. Medical professionals, like plastic surgical experts, skin specialists, and oral, jaws and face experts, are especially interested execute treatments that impact on bodily aesthetic and people satisfy about their appearance. Since the 1970s, botox was used in eye medicine. But, it has been also used in other areas of healthcare, particularly in skin treatments in the past 20 years (De Almeida, Secco, & Carruthers, 2011). The initial form of Botox available was called onabotulinum toxin A (Awan, 2017). The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommend its use for the treatment of wrinkles between the eyebrows in 2002. A newer version of this treatment got approval from the European Union in 2006 and the FDA in 2009 (Witmanowski & Błochowiak, 2020). People commonly employ the expression “Botox” to talk about all the components employ in beauty treatments.

A study conducted by (Markey, 2000) in 2004 highlight the effectiveness of Botulinum toxin (Botox) that is used for body aesthetic. It is an injection that helps to improve the appearance of frown lines on the forehead, fine lines around the mouth caused by smoking, lines around the mouth and chin, neck bands, crossed eyes, excessive blinking, neck spasms, excessive sweating, and certain face muscle movements after surgery.

Additionally, various businesses have emerged across the nation, providing education and awareness about health and wellness, such as low-fat clinics, gyms, make up, cosmetics surgery centers, medicines, lifestyle coaches and companies that offer facial and stomach patching, intestinal and stomach lessening (Khan, Khalid, Khan, & Jabeen, 2011) for body gaining the aesthetic of body.

2.3 Role of Multivitamins in Gym Culture

In developed countries, people often visit fitness centers and uses multivitamins to maintain or improve their physical appearance and functional capacity (Benardot, 2020). Regular physical exercise increases the body’s energy and nutrient demands, making it vital to maintain a healthy diet to improve performance, training, energy revitalization, and reduces fatigue and improvement time. A study conducted by (Figueiredo, Balteiro, & Rocha, 2021) on the consumption of supplements by gym attendants and health club revealed that

the occurrence of intake of multivitamins is more frequent among males (58.9%). Multivitamins with mineral salts (46.2%) and whey protein (89%) were the most commonly ingested type of vitamin and protein supplement, respectively. The primary motivation for taking these supplements was to hasten the recovery process (62.3%).

Research conducted by (Ruano & Teixeira, 2020) and (Senekal et al., 2019) on the use of dietary supplements by gym members shows that gym going youth frequently take dietary supplements for multiple reasons, including enhancing performance, shedding weight and building muscle, and development of physical fitness. The use of multivitamins by gym attendees may not produce actual advantages and may even be detrimental. Having a thorough understanding of these products is crucial to prevent misuse and ensure comprehension of what a supplement is and how to use it correctly (Čaušević, Ormanović, Doder, & Čović, 2017).

According to (Maughan et al., 2018), a balanced diet and adequate training are vital, and evidence suggests that taking certain multivitamins supplements can enhance performance for gym going youth and athletes. Recognizing and evaluating perspectives among Israeli adult gym going youth who engage in physical activity regarding nutritional supplements shows that coaches and gym trainers are typically the primary sources of information or recommendations on multivitamins supplements, even though they may not always be sufficiently knowledgeable about the nutrition (Druker & Edelsburg, 2017). They are intended to provide a convenient way to supplement the diet with essential nutrients that may be lacking in a person's daily food intake.

In the pursuit of a more muscular physique, individuals used different methods including the utilization of anabolic steroids, multivitamins and professional bodybuilding. It has been estimated that approximately 20-33% of young boys desire a larger and more muscular body. It is not uncommon for youth male and female to use anabolic steroids and multivitamins for results. Additionally, less drastic methods, such as consuming a high quantity of food, engaging in exercise and recreational bodybuilding, and taking

multivitamins, dietary supplements like protein powder, are also commonly employed to increase muscle mass (Ricciardelli, 2012).

Individuals' use of multivitamins varies across various demographics and is impacted by various elements including age, gender, financial status, self-reliance tendencies, educational background, familiarity with medical information, ease and interpretation of ailments (Aljinović-Vucić, Trkulja, & Lacković, 2005). According to (Avenell et al., 2005), as individuals grow older, their nutritional necessities may alter, motivating them to opt for multivitamins in order to sustain their overall health and body. A minimum of 25% of elderly individuals in the Western culture consume dietary supplements.

The consumption of multivitamins was also prevalent among senior citizens and correlated with improved overall health consequences (Tariq, Khan, & Basharat, 2020). (Mullie, Clarys, Hulens, & Vansant, 2010) stated that the utilization of multivitamins was linked to increased educational attainment and socioeconomic status, indicating that cultural and financial factors that might influence the inclination towards using dietary supplements. Regarding the state of health, a study conducted by (Lee, Son, & Short, 2016) on Korean adults who consumed vitamins and were between 20-44 years old had a higher tendency to consider their health as poor (43.9%), not be overweight (33.5%), and have low levels of triglycerides (39.6%). In contrast, those who were 45-64 years old and consumed vitamins had a higher probability of seeing themselves as overweight (50.2%), not experiencing any restrictions on their activities (47.5%), and having low levels of triglycerides (49.4%).

As per the research conducted by (Basch, Mongiovi, Berdnik, & Basch, 2016) on the most commonly watched multivitamins related videos, it was observed that the promotion of multivitamins and supplements has been widespread since the 1930s, even though their marketing often sets unrealistic goals. Vitamins are frequently publicized in mainstream news media and commercials as being crucial for two reasons; to guarantee sufficient intake of micronutrients and to enhance physical appearance. Advertisements

also advocate the indispensability of vitamin supplements for achieving optimal health. Multivitamins are widely used by people particularly youngsters who engage in professional sports or fitness groups such as CrossFit.

According to (Williams, 2004) study on dietary supplements and physical performance, the use of multivitamins pointed out that various sportsman has turned to different dietary strategies, including the use of various dietary supplements which they believe to be effective, secure, authorized and as a mean of improving their bodily abilities. Multivitamins in the gym culture make it possible for gym going youth to deal with all health related issues in a positive way such as improved physical performance, faster recovery time, increased stamina, muscularity that aligns with male body ideals, weight control, fat loss and mental alertness (Poulios et al., 2019). The use of supplements and performance increasing multivitamins can be an efficient way to enhance overall health, construct muscles and physique for good body image. Furthermore, exercise supplements can aid in injury prevention and promote faster recovery (Wardenaar et al., 2017). Through incorporating whey protein supplementation into everyday workout routine, individuals experience additional benefits such as increased muscle protein synthesis (Rezaei, 2017).

2.3.1 Availability

Multivitamin and multi mineral supplements are easily available and accessible. Pharmacies have a vital role to play in ensuring the availability and convenience of multivitamins for self-medication. As licensed providers of medicines and health related products, pharmacies are typically the first choice for people looking for non-prescription multivitamins. They provide a broad range of multivitamin options, comprising various brands, compositions and strengths, thereby simplifying the process of selecting the appropriate product. Additionally, pharmacies are usually situated in easily accessible locations, such as shopping centers, grocery stores and medical facilities, making it effortless for individuals to purchase multivitamins while running errands or visiting healthcare professionals (Hussain & Khanum, 2008). The availability of medication is a significant contributor to the high frequency of self-medication practices (Khan et al., 2014). According to (Naidu, Krishna, & Rao, 2015), the availability and accessibility of over the counter medicine (OTC) is also the factor for using multivitamins by the people.

As modern medicine industrialized, the act of using multivitamins continued, with people using non-prescription drugs and supplements to address different conditions (Labre, 2002). Doctors often tell patients to take multivitamins along with their other medications (Shahzad et al., 2022). Almost half of all medicines sold in Pakistan are provided with no prescription (Aqeel et al., 2014). Dietary supplements can also be available from pharmacies and licensed parapharmacies (Brunelli et al., 2022). As per the 2019 findings of Centre for Social Studies and Policies, 95% of the total sales of dietary supplements occur through pharmacies (86%) and parapharmacies (9%) (Alves, Precioso, & Becoña, 2020). Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994, mandates that the manufacturer of dietary supplements or ingredients must ensure their safety before they are available in the market. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is responsible for taking action against any hazardous dietary supplements after they are released for public use (Bailey, Gahche, Miller, Thomas, & Dwyer, 2013). In Pakistan, Analgesics, antibiotics, anti-diarrheal, antihistamines, antipyretics, cough medicines, tonics and multivitamins (Arroll & Kenealy, 2002) are all readily available without a prescription from community pharmacies (Barrett, 2011).

As the population grows, urbanization expands and media exposure increases, the consumer healthcare industry grow rapidly. As a result, the market for vitamin supplements has been identified as one of the fastest growing companies in the world (Fair, 2023). The prominent vitamin supplement brands in the US have invested millions of dollars in promotional and marketing campaigns in 2014. Medical professionals, pharmaceutical companions, family members, online platforms, peer groups, newspapers, media including television, newspapers, magazines, leaflets, direct mail, publications and gym trainers have been considered as sources for knowledge and availability on multivitamins supplements (Ferrucci, McCorkle, Smith, Stein, & Cartmel, 2009). Acquaintances or relatives could suggest multivitamins according to their individual interactions, beliefs and experiences. Moreover, the internet is an influential platform for promoting and publicizing multivitamins availability to have a significant influence on consumer choices (Mchiza, Temple, Steyn, Abrahams, & Clayford, 2013). Online

communities and blogs also recommend multivitamins product to consumers in a positive way (Papanicolas, Woskie, & Jha, 2018). These platforms highlight the potential benefits of multivitamins, such as supporting immune function, boosting energy levels, gaining good positive body image and preventing nutrient deficiencies (Rock, 2007).

The role of brands in advertising and marketing of multivitamin products can be understood as a process of creating and shaping cultural meanings around health, gaining positive body image and consumer choices. They use advertising and marketing techniques to create desire for their products among consumers and make available to them. They create awareness, build trust and differentiate their products from those of competitors. It also involves creating a unique identity for a product or company that is recognizable and desirable to consumers (Goston & Correia, 2010).

Multivitamins, multi minerals and dietary supplements uniqueness is found in various forms such as tablets, pills, capsules, gummies, powders, liquids, beverages, protein bars and they contain different nutrients and multivitamins that are essential for a person's body development, good health, growth, reproduction, maintain body aesthetic and fitness. They are divided into two major groups; micronutrients and macronutrients. Micronutrients are defined as nutrients that a human body need in small amount. It contains vitamins and minerals and their deficiency in the body leads to health problems. Nutrients that are need in large amount are called macronutrients such as fats, protein, carbohydrates and water. There are six crucial nutrients that are vitamins, protein, fats, minerals, carbohydrates and water that a human body requires to use from their diet to sustain proper health and to make his body good (Pocobelli, Peters, Kristal, & White, 2009). These all forms are easily available and accessible without a prescription and can be purchased in any form from over the counter at pharmacies, health food stores and online retailers (Angelo, Drake, & Frei, 2014).

2.4 Diet and Exercise

In contemporary society, physical appearance and body image are highly esteemed, as evidenced by advertisements, publishers and everyday interactions. A notable surge has

also been noticed in the favorability of physical fitness, with the advent of fitness icons like a United States actress and activist Jane Seymour Fonda and Richard Simmons who is a renowned fitness icon and prominent public figure, recognized for his unconventional, vivacious, and dynamic persona. He has endorsed programs for shedding pounds, primarily through his *Sweatin' to the Oldies* series of aerobic videos (Sedibe et al., 2014). Women in particular, compete with other women to achieve an idealized beauty, mainly by exhibiting signs of health and fertility. This may lead to certain dieting beliefs, which involve maximizing fitness by focusing on look and displaying signs of youthfulness and good health (Carracedo et al., 2013)

The media and publishers along with social demands, promote the ideal thin body that has added to the extensive adoption of dieting beliefs among women. The media and social pressure also suggest that people have control over their diet, as portrayed in magazines and diet books, and can achieve their desired appearance with minimal effort. Young women in particular, may strive for an ideal body figure that is tall, smart, thin, and beautiful, and may follow dieting beliefs and engage in physical efforts to achieve it (Marie et al., 2014).

In recent years, many books and articles have been written about how people see and feel about their bodies. Generally, it shows that females want to have a very thin physique. They are more concerned about its aesthetic concerns instead of how it affects their health. As compared to any other time since the 1930s, body image particularly has gained immense importance in today's society (Garner, Garfinkel, Schwartz, & Thompson, 1980).

Earlier studies (Fallon & Rozin, 1985) and (Gray, 1977) suggested that females are more disappointed by their physical attractiveness and weight and dieted more as compared to males. However, modern researches by (Drewnowski & Yee, 1987) and (Silberstein, Moore, Timko, & Rodin, 1988) concluded males are equally divided among individuals who want to shed weight and those who want to increase mass. Another study (Fallon & Rozin, 1985), found that males felt happy with their bodies appearances. They

did not worry as much regarding being or becoming overweight. Instead of dieting, they used bodily exercise to manage their weight (Drewnowski & Yee, 1987).

Research conducted on ideal body types by (Tucker, 1982), has found that nearly 70% of youthful males in college were unhappy with how their physical appearance and according to (Huenemann, Shapiro, Hampton, & Mitchell, 1966) youth wanted to have a more muscular physique that mean to add more weight. They do more exercise and use steroids to get mass and strength (Yesalis, 1992).

According to (McCann & Holmes, 1984) regular exercise is said to have a lot of good effects on body with mind. It can make heart and blood vessels work better, lower chances of high blood pressure, and decrease cause of brittle bones. It can also help with depression and anxiety. Perceptions and values concerning diet and exercise have a significant influence on youth and adults eating habits, physical wellness and self-perception of body image. These messages not only dictate what one should look like but also imply that a perfect body shape can be attained with ease. People invest their time, money and effort in attaining and preserving beauty through clothing, hair, dieting and exercise (Zhen, Ma, Zhao, Yang, & Wen, 2018).

In today's fast paced world, where people are juggling between work, family and social obligations, maintaining good health and body often takes a backseat. The existing literature does not talk about the use of multivitamins as a shortcut for fulfilling the bodily demand of popular culture. Furthermore, there is a gap in the literature that how the social roles, lifestyle, marital status, marriage, jobs impact on certain body image roles and influences people choices to use multivitamins as a short cut to achieve bodily and beauty standards that are constructed by Pakistani society. Moreover, it also does not talk about the use of multivitamins as a shortcut way to gain the desired body image by gym going youth and what influences gym going youth to take control on their health. The present research is an attempt to understand the relationship between socio-cultural body image factors that played their role in the life of gym going youth to participate in fitness centers and use multivitamins as self-medication. This research is different from previous

researches that it is an ethnographic research and it covers the perspectives of gym going youth about the use of multivitamins supplements that is valuable consideration to the existing literature. The present research explores the beauty standards that are constructed in Pakistani society and how that beauty standard authorizes persons to take accountability for their physical condition in a speedily changing and multifaceted world.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

My study utilizes two different theories, i.e., the *Social comparison theory* by Leon Festinger in 1954 and the *Self-care theory* by Dorothea Orem in between 1959 and 2001. These theories will support to understand the gym going youth indulgence in the self-medication of multivitamins by keeping in mind one's bodily appearance, social influence, cultural standards and lifestyle.

2.5.1 Social Comparison Theory

Social comparison theory was first proposed by social psychologist Leon Festinger in 1954. Festinger argued that individuals evaluate their own abilities, accomplishments and status by comparing themselves with others. According to this theory, individuals engage in social comparison to comprehend their own capabilities, characteristics and to assess their own perspectives, attitudes and behavior.

Social comparison has two types: upward comparison and downward comparison. Upward comparison happens when individuals contrast themselves with others who are superior to them in terms of abilities, skills or achievements. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. However, it can also serve as a motivation to enhance oneself and strive for greater success. Downward comparison occurs when individuals compare themselves with others who are inferior to them in terms of skills, abilities or achievements. This can lead to feelings of superiority and increased self-esteem, but can also lead to satisfaction and a lack of motivation to improve. In general, social comparison theory suggests that individuals engage in social comparison as a mean to evaluate themselves and their position in the social world. It can have both positive and negative effects on individuals, depending on the type of comparison and the context in which it occurs (Festinger, 1954).

Many gym going youth take multivitamins without proper medical consultation, mainly to improve their physical performance or to enhance their appearance. Social comparison can play a role in this behavior in several ways. Firstly, gym going youth compare themselves to others who are perceived to have a better physique or higher level of fitness. This comparison may lead to feelings of lack and a desire to improve their own physical appearance and performance. As a result, they may turn to multivitamins as a way to enhance their own physical abilities and achieve their fitness goals.

Secondly, social comparison also influences the perceived norms and expectations of the gym culture. Gym going youth perceive that taking multivitamins is a shortcut and acceptable practice among their peers. This perception of social norms increases the possibility of self-medication with multivitamins, even if they are not medically necessary or recommended.

Finally, social comparison also influences the way gym going youth seek information about multivitamins. They may rely on information from friends who have had positive experiences with multivitamins, and have gain positive body image as a result.

2.5.2 Self-Care Theory

The self-care theory is a multidisciplinary theory that draws on concepts from disciplines such as psychology, sociology, health related disciplines and other social sciences to understand and promote self-care behaviors. Self-care theory was developed by Dorothea Orem, between 1959 and 2001 (Gonzalo, 2023). This theory highlights the significance of individuals actively participating in maintaining their health and wellbeing and proposes that individuals possess an inherent desire and capacity to take care of themselves. According to Orem's theory of self-care, individuals engage in self-care activities to sustain their health and well-being, prevent illness and injury and manage prevailing health conditions. Self-care theory identify that individuals have unique needs and preferences concerning self-care and that effective self-care practices may differ based on factors such as age, gender, culture and lifestyle. These self-care behaviors may involve a range of actions, such as eating a healthy diet, engaging in regular exercise, managing stress and seeking medical care when necessary. The theory of self-care also acknowledges the

influence of social and environmental factors in promoting or obstructing self-care practices (Berbiglia, 2011).

Self-care theory is applicable in the way that gym going youth is taking responsibilities for their own health and wellbeing. Gym going youth self-medicate with various multivitamins not only to keep their physique fit and healthy but also to gain their desired physique. Gym going youth are highly influenced by their gym culture in order to maintain their workout, healthy diets and used multivitamins for their better lifestyle and body aesthetic. Social and cultural factor of the gym environment also have significant role in promoting the use of multivitamins supplements because most of the gym going youth self-medicate by their own and on the recommendation of the trainers. It is likely that fitness enthusiasts who are engage in this behavior are motivated by a desire to take control of their own health and wellbeing. They view the use of multivitamins as safe and easy to enhance their physical appearances and achieve their desired body image that are highly valued within their social and cultural context.

3 RESEARCH SETTING AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter is divided into two parts. First, the research setting that deals with the locale of the study where the research has been conducted. Then, the second part comprises detailed and elaborate account of the research methodology that was implemented for collecting data while conducting research in Johar Town located in Iqbal Tehsil of Lahore.

3.1 Locale of the Study

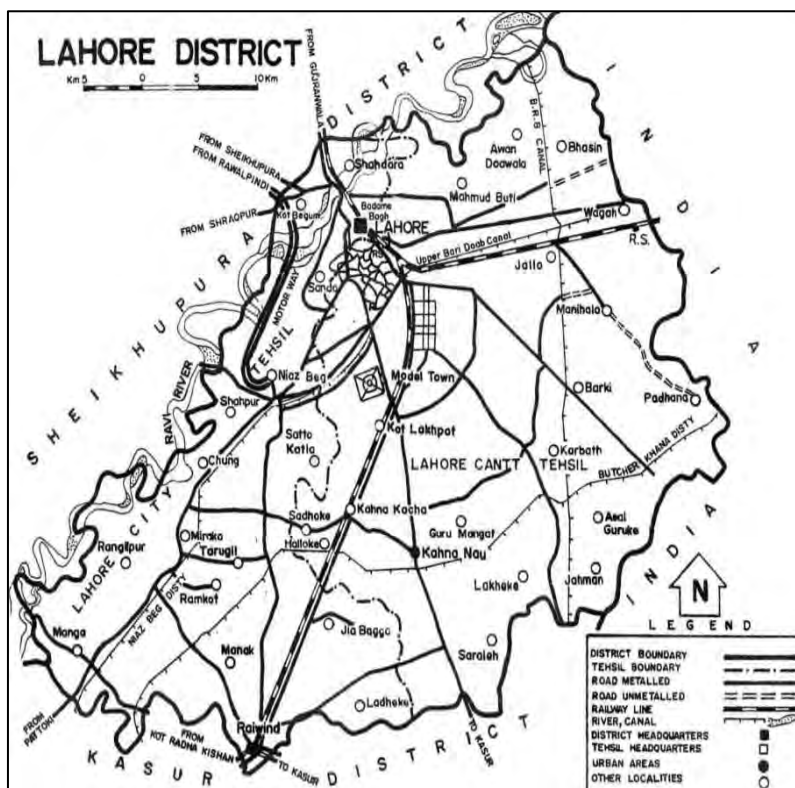
The urban gym of Lahore was selected as the locale of the study to gain an in-depth understanding on the multivitamins and body image. Lahore is the capital of province Punjab. It is the second most populous city in Pakistan. It is a city that has been shaped by the passage of time and is now a vast metropolis of Punjab. It is situated in the center of the province. It is selected as the locale of the study because the city is the depiction of variety of cultures and different ethnic groups and peoples. The urbanites exhibit a vast diversity in their lifestyle and the socio-cultural perspectives they have about their body aesthetic and appearance that they achieve it through the use of multivitamins.

Johar Town is a housing society that comes under the union council (UC 114) situated in Iqbal Tehsil of Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. This locality is called Johar Town in honor of Mohammad Ali Jouhar, who was one of the distinguished leaders of the Pakistan Movement. Its area is situated with the Latitude 32.32839° or 32° 19' 42" North and Longitude 74.35552° or 74° 21' 20" East. Johar town has two subdivisions. Phase-1 include blocks A-A1, A2, A3, B-B1, B2, B3, C-C1, C2, D-D1, D2, E-E1, E2, F-F1, F2 and G-G1 while phase-2 includes blocks G-G2, G3, G4, H-H1, H2, H3, K, L, M, N, P, Q and R-R1, R2, R3 (The Punjab Gazette, 2017).

The locale of the study was Momentum Fitness Gym and Supplement Store that is located on 2nd Floor, 287 H-2, Abdul Haq Road, opposite Emporium Mall Gate#4, Block H-2, Phase-II, Johar Town, Lahore. It was established in 2020². It is a fitness gym and also a supplement store. The main building of gym is located on the 2nd floor.

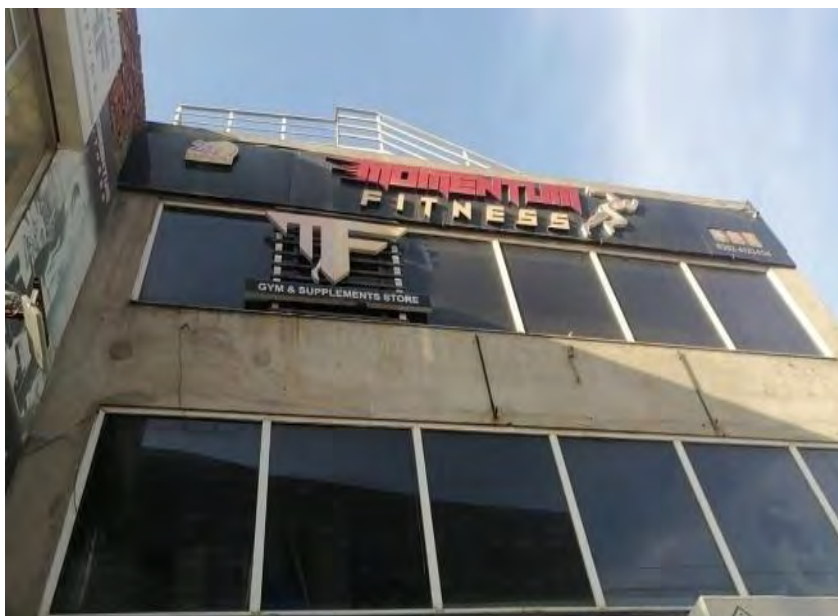
² According to gym staff

Figure 1: Locale of the Study



Source: District Census Report, 2017

Figure 2: Building of Momentum Fitness Gym and Supplement Store



Source: Author, 2023

The first floor consists of Designo Home Furniture and Interiors. There are stairs, to the left side of Furniture and Interiors home shop that is the main entrance to the gym. After going up the stairs, it has a reception area. It deals with clients and customers. There is a computer at the reception where all clients' data are available. Additionally, it includes gym ads and pamphlets and some standee banners of supplements and vitamins.

Up a few more stairs, before entering the main gym hall gate, there is a small area with weight machines, water dispensers, disposable glasses, waste bin and some shelves with various supplement products. This area is also used to store some of the customer's belongings such as helmets and bags. Before entering the main gym hall, it has sanitizer for hygiene purpose. After entering the gate, there are secure lockers on the right side. Separate showers and changing areas for ladies and gents.

Figure 3: Picture on the Main Entrance of the Gym



Source: Author, 2023

Gym hall contains all imported machinery. The hall area is divided into different parts containing four treadmills, core machine, muscle massager, elliptical, two exercise bicycles, strength machines, dumbbells corner, punching bag, rope strengthening, matting area for yoga practice. It also has backup power and is fully air conditioned. The third floor is the roof.

Figure 4: Main Hall of the Gym



Source: Author, 2023

3.1.1 Gym as a Supplement Store

Momentum fitness gym also works as supplements store. It provides convenience to their clients if they want to buy imported and branded multivitamins like; from Amazon they can place their order at reception when the product arrives at the gym, they give it to their clients.

3.1.2 Gym Staff

This gym has five trainers. Two are female trainers named; Sarah and Nida and three are male trainers named; Zubair, Hassan and Abid. Two receptionists are also available. Ammarah a female receptionist does her duty from 7:00 am to 2:30 pm and Aahad a male receptionist do his duty from 2:30 pm to 11:00 pm.

3.1.3 Charges of Gym

The registration fee for joining gym is Rs/-3000 and monthly fee is Rs/-7000. If you hire personal trainer it will charge Rs/-15000. Moreover, monthly/membership charges are non-refundable and non-transferable. This gym also offers three packages that were for limited time. First, silver package is for one month that charge Rs/-7000. Second is gold package

for four months that charge Rs/-25000 and last one is platinum package for six months that charge Rs/-38000.

Figure 5: Fee Charges of Gym

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration fee Rs/- 3000 • Monthly Fee Rs/- 7000 • Personal training Rs/- 15000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silver Package (1month) Rs/- 7000 • Gold package (4months) Rs/- 25000 • Platinum Package (6months) Rs/- 38000
<p>Monthly / Membership Charges are non Refundable and non Transferable</p>	

Source: Author, 2023

3.1.4 Gym Timings

Monday to Friday daily gym timings for male and female is 7:00 am to 11:00 pm. Female only timings start from 10:00 am till 1:30 pm then again male and female timings starts from 1:30 pm till 11:00 pm. Saturday timings for male and female is 7:00 am to 10:30 pm. Female only timings start from 10:30 am till 1:30 pm then again male and female timings starts from 1:30 pm till 9:00 pm.

3.1.5 Instructions for Gym People

There are some instructions for gym members that are mentioned in the main gym hall. Filled water cups are strictly prohibited in the gym hall due to hygiene issue. Moreover, it is instructed to members to bring their own towels. Dues have to be pay within two days of expiry. For all trainers' cell phones are not allowed on the floor as it distracts employees from performing simple business tasks otherwise Rs/-500 fine will be charged. Trainers can leave phones at reception or inside lockers. Members can complain (identity will be kept secret). But, it has been observed that everybody was using mobile openly and on one is complaining to staff.

3.2 Research Methodology

It discusses the applied research methodology that was used to collect data. Ethnographic research is a method that is used to study cultural perspectives and to study the individual's experiences, reality, beliefs that are understandable through participant observation

(Naidoo, 2012). An ethnographic research method has been used to obtain data from gym going respondents through first-hand experience that how they perceived multivitamin and maintain their body image through the self-medication of multivitamins. Different techniques and methods have been used to conduct this anthropological research. The methods used for this research was researcher as participant observer, in-depth interviews, focus group discussion (FGDs), field notes and rapport building. These methods are appropriate and beneficial to gain comprehensive understanding of participants and their perspectives on self-medication of multivitamins among gym going youth. It further explains the sampling techniques utilized for selecting samples for the research.

3.2.1 Researcher as Participant Observer

Participant observation is one of the main anthropological research methods in which the researcher understands his field and immerses him in their culture to understand their cultural practices, beliefs and lifestyle (Kawulich, 2005). Researcher carried out participant as observer at Momentum Fitness Gym and Supplement Store that is located in Lahore. Researcher spent time at Momentum Fitness Gym and Supplement Store for four months i.e. from November 12, 2022 to February 27, 2023.

Participant as observer is used by the researcher as a main fieldwork method to target her gym going audience and immersed in their daily activity in order to collect data in their natural setting. The researcher focused to be a participant as observer because she does not exercise and use multivitamins as self-medication. Researcher observes their daily activities in order to explore their cultural context and the reasons behind using multivitamins as self-medications.

In the gym, both males and females were observed. Females were also observed in their separate timings because most of the families do not allow their girls to interact with the opposite gender that is why in Pakistani society gyms also have separate time and spaces for the females. Male members are strictly not allowed to enter gym during the ladies' hour. They are requested to leave the floor by 10:00 am sharp. Moreover, female trainers are also available to give training to females who do not want to take training from male trainers even in the male and female hours.

Furthermore, the researcher observes the participants and the trainers who are giving training to the respondents. They are guiding them to use the machines for 15 to 20 minutes. After completing the given task within the specified time, the participants inform the trainers and they guide them and assign them the next task according to their bodily demands. The trainers also put an eye on their clients and if they are not moving their body parts properly while exercising they perform the task for them and guide them.

It has been also observed by the researcher that most of the participants in the gym used pre-workout supplement especially for muscle building. It has to be taken 20 to 30 minutes before workout. In order to fulfill the required time, participants sit on the exercise machines and use their mobiles. Researcher also sits on the various exercise machines and talk to them while they are exercising or fulfilling the pre-work out supplement time because there is no designated seating area in the gym. Apart from this, there is also a loud music system in the gym but most of the respondents listen to their favorite songs on their mobile phones.

Researcher also observed that there are many mirrors in the gym. A variety of quotes and body images are present on the walls of the gym that encourages the gym going youth to achieve their desired body image.

3.2.2 Key Informants

Key informants are the person who becomes crucial to the ethnographic research for variety of reasons. Key informants may be an agency authority, residents of the neighborhood, community leader, or local company owner. They have detailed knowledge about certain characteristics of the community, the location visited and the people because of their duties, leaderships, professional and personal experiences (Tremblay, 1957). Key informants knowledgeably help the researcher to know the things that the researcher wants to know. The researcher used the two gym trainers as the key informants. One is the female trainer and other is the male trainer. Researcher discussed the research topic with both of them and they facilitate the researcher. They are willing to give access to the respondents and create a suitable environment for the conduction of interviews to collect the data.

Sarah a female trainer of age-24 and Abid a male trainer of age-27 was working from two years in the gym and was selected as the key informants because they are not the part time trainers. They worked from morning to night in the gym and have proper knowledge about the gym culture and the members who joined gym for positive body image and used multivitamins. The reason to select the female trainer was that she was the one who deals with female respondents even in female only hour. She also knows that how to deal with the female participants when they are on their menstruation period. Male key informant is selected because he is the one who know more detailed of the male participants of the gym who are using pre-workout multivitamins supplements especially for muscles building.

They both are well aware of their participant's diet and the multivitamins consumed by them. They also prescribed different multivitamins to their clients according to the need of their bodies so they were asked to tell the people to whom they are recommending different multivitamins and who are using multivitamins by their own. Both key informants helped the researcher to access those participants who are suitable for my research. Most of the respondents also helped the researcher to give access to their friends so that the researcher can also interview them.

Without the key informants it was very difficult for the researcher to access those participants who used the multivitamins. They introduce me to them and explain them the purpose of my visit to the gym. Researcher asks them their availability, and then the researcher takes interview at their scheduled time.

3.2.3 Rapport Building

Rapport building is the process of acquiring mutual understanding, trust and connection with someone. The main purpose of rapport building is to develop a peaceful and friendly environment with others (Mirić & Bakić, 2010).

Rapport building helps the researcher to gain mutual understanding and trust between the gym going youth and the researcher. The researcher has spent some extra time with the respondents in the gym hall while they are waiting for their drivers to pick them up from the gym and if they have done exercise. Researcher also participated in the birthday

celebrations of the respondents and trainers that take place in the gym area in order to develop good relationship and trust with the respondent. Researcher also wished them and gave gifts to them. It assists interviewees in developing good relationship, trust and provides mutual understanding and confidence to the respondents. Key informants also make the participants to be comfortable with the researcher.

Proficiency in understanding the local language was an added advantage. Familiarization with the Urdu language also helps to establish a trust between the gym going participants and the researcher. At the start of each conversation, rapport building was made to acquire rich data. For developing positive relationship and the understanding with the respondents the researcher tries to be friendly and honest during communication. Moreover, the researcher gives them surety to keep their identity confidential. Researcher become an active listener and does not interrupt while they are speaking. It was an effort to make the respondents comfortable with the researcher and put them on ease to share their perspectives openly.

3.2.4 Semi-Structured Interview Guide

An interview guide was also prepared before conducting the fieldwork based on the literature and the experiences of the researcher. According to (Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016) an interview guide is a list of different themes and queries that the researcher intends to cover at the time of interview. It is important for a researcher to have a good interview guide that relate to the research in order to make sure that all the variables related to topic were discussed while conducting interviews. The purpose of the interview guide is get meaningful response to every question that is being asked to the respondents. During the in-depth interviews and the FGDs, the interview guide was not strictly followed by the researcher but the common nature of the questions is as according to the interview guide. Additionally, to gain clarity in the responses of the respondents almost every question is followed by the probing technique.

Furthermore, for the testing of interview guide, pilot study was also conducted in the gym of Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad in order to make changes in the interview guide by adding and subtracting questions related to research objectives of the study. All

the points mentioned in the interview guide were clearly understood by the respondents that allow them to express their opinions in their native language.

3.2.5 Case Study Method

Case study is an approach that involves a thorough study of particular person, community or entity within its real life context to gain intensive understanding (Meyer, 2001). Case studies connect theoretical thoughts to the experimental realities and variables to basic meanings. It helps to see the detailed information about the genuine case of the respondent.

Researcher used five case studies that were described in the analysis section and helps to gain better understanding between the personal experiences and the issue. It also helps the researcher to find out the negative and positive experiences of the respondents who used multivitamins for their body images and body aesthetic that assist the researcher to analyze the entire situation.

3.2.6 Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)

Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) is a data collection method in which a small group of individuals discuss their opinions in details on a specific subject or questions (Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick, & Mukherjee, 2018). It helps to understand the different opinions of the respondents in a group who belong to educational and professional background.

Two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted, one with the group of males and other with the group of females who belongs to gym. In each group the number of respondents was twelve with age ranging from twenty to thirty-four years. Researcher first introduced the topic of the research to the participants and act as the mediator. Afterward, they were asked questions and then they expressed their perspectives one by one. Respondents of the gym act naturally due to the comfortable structure of the FGDs and it helps the researcher to note rich responses. It was conducted in the local language and most of the participants share their hardship stories and the arguments they faced from the opposite gender regarding body image and the use of multivitamins. It helps the researcher to obtain useful information and body image requirements demanded by the opposite sex. All the discussion was recorded and later on the researcher listen to it and transcribed it in English language for analysis.

3.2.7 In-depth Interviews

The research generally includes in-depth interviews as a main technique to gain information about the perspectives, experiences, feelings and behavior of the respondents (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011). The aim of in-depth interviews is to learn about respondent's perspectives that how they see, comprehend and construct sense of their own body image and use multivitamins. It also helps to explore that how respondents give meaning to certain situations, experiences, events, activities and concepts related to self-medication of multivitamins. In order to get intensive interviews, in-depth interviews were taken from the gym going youth who used multivitamins as self-medication.

Interviews was started with a general conversation to help respondents feel confident enough to express their perspectives and share their experiences. Moreover, the local language was used for conversation during the interviews that helps a researcher to communicate and get a wider understanding of the participants. Majority of gym participants communicate in Urdu as their mother language and all the interviews were taken in Urdu language. The average time to conduct interviews was 35 to 45 minutes. Later on, all the interviews were transcribed in English language.

3.2.8 Field Notes

Field notes are the written record of fieldwork. It is the valuable resource that help later to arrange the data that a researcher gathered during field work (Bernard, 2013). The purpose of field notes is that it is the essential source that helps in understanding particular phenomenon.

After coming back from the field researcher notes all the observations and impressions of the respondents in the diary so that any important information cannot be missed while the interviews were recorded in the mobile. It assists the researcher to note the activities, performances, actions and other aspects of the respondents in their natural setting. Using the field notes technique also help the researcher to understand a lot about the way gym culture shapes the ideas about the body image and its role in the society. Staying in gym also helps the researcher to experience the influence of gym culture on the behavior of the respondents. Field notes also help the researcher to remind the data that was collected during the fieldwork while doing analysis.

3.2.9 Photography

Photographs are used by the researcher because photographs bring clarity to research and help to analyze the data. Researcher has also taken the pictures of the gym by using the mobile to provide accurate information about the gym and the multivitamins products that are present in the gym premises. Researcher also used the images of the body of some of the respondents in the analysis section for more clarity about the body images prefer by the gym going youth and to the results that they gain by using multivitamins as self-medication. Some of the respondents who did not remember the name of the multivitamin but know the reason of using it; later share the picture with the researcher after going home. Some images of multivitamins that are told by the respondents were also taken from the internet and the researcher cites their source.

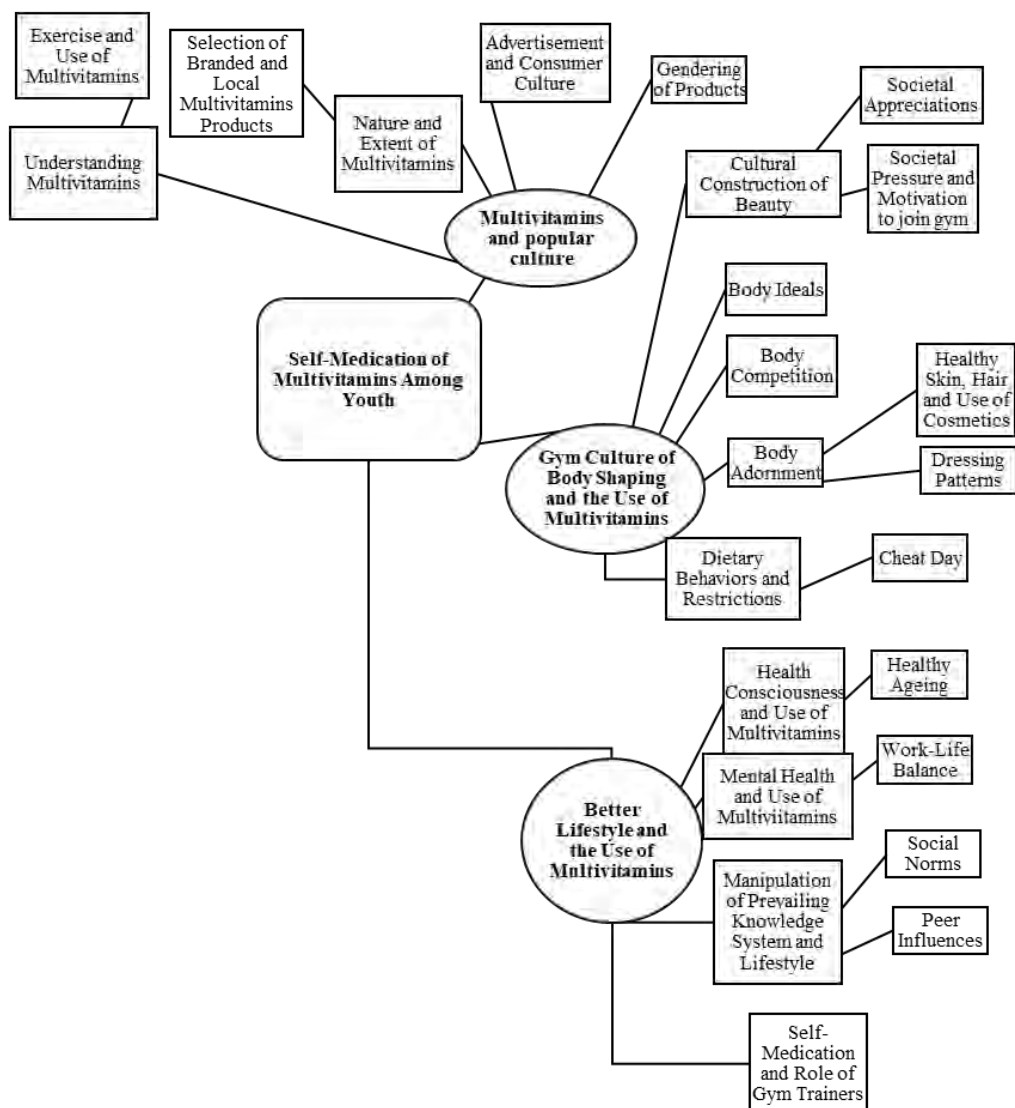
3.2.10 Thematic Analysis

It is a method that helps to examine various themes or patterns of meaning after data collection. It focuses on analyzing, evaluating, examining and interpreting the qualitative data patterns. It also enables to develop inductive formulation of codes and themes (Alhojailan & Ibrahim, 2012).

After data collection, researcher used the technique of thematic analysis for data analysis. Researcher used this method because it the realistic method that focuses on reporting the experiences, meanings, and reality of the participants. It is the appropriate and accurate way that helps the researcher to examine the data to find out common themes, topics and patterns that exists repetitively. This method assists the researchers to code the interesting parts in a systematic order and combine data that is related to each code.

Researcher made themes by transcribing the interviews and analyzing the data to make connections and make it easier to understand. The researchers found various ideas or topics within the data they collected. Some of these ideas came from theories, the interview guide, and the objectives of the study. Field notes were also the part of thematic analysis. The researcher creates several themes and makes three chapters for analysis that aids in obtaining a comprehensive explanation of the research.

Figure 6: Generating Themes By Using Thematic Analysis



Source: Author,2023

3.2.11 Sampling Technique

In Anthropological research, choosing sample of participants according to the suitability of your research is a first and foremost step. The process of selecting a subset from a defined population for participation in research is called sampling (Marshall, 1996).

Researcher used this technique for sample collecting because the selected locale has a large population and it is not possible to use all the people as a sample. Hence, the purposive sampling technique was used by the researcher to select the targeted sample of the research in the gym.

3.2.12 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling technique has been used to collect the sample in this study. It is also known as judgment sampling. It is a technique in which the researcher selects the participants based on the characteristics that the respondents have, to engage in the study in order to explore the research objectives. It is the non-random method that does not require a conceptual framework or a predetermined number of respondents. The researcher decides what needs to identify and then finds respondents who are willing to provide data based on their historical background, experiences and knowledge (Etikan, 2016).

Purposive sampling is a useful method when someone wants to focus on one specific cultural area. Hence, this is ethnographic research and to study one particular culture; gym going youth was targeted for this research because as modernization increases it influences the gym youth perspectives and thoughts about the body aesthetic and positive body image. The purpose of the study was to collect various perspectives of the gym going youth who use multivitamins for their body aesthetic and body image. Youth always struggle for the best and try to keep them up to date in body aesthetic and fulfill the beauty trends. Based on these perspectives, researcher wants to know the youth thoughts, attitude and actions that they take to maintain their body image. The research sample was heterogeneous in terms of age, class, status, ethnicity, educational qualification and socio-economic position. Furthermore, to keep the sample's heterogeneity, participants from various ages, educational and socioeconomic backgrounds were selected.

3.2.13 Sample Size

The sample size of 25 respondents of age bracket (18 to 41) was selected. The sample includes youngsters (age 18-24), early youth (age 25-34) and older youth (age 35-41) out of which 13 were females and 12 were males through purposive sampling technique and in-depth interviews. Respondents from different age bracket were selected because different age people pass from the phase of life where they go from physical and emotional

changes, especially during puberty. These changes make them more focused on their body. Researcher makes respondents diversify representation of the society.

Respondents from different demographic data was used in the research by keeping in mind their gender, marital status, qualification and source of income. The heterogeneous sample provides rich data on self-medication of multivitamins among gym going youth. People who did not attend this gym were not the part of this research.

3.2.14 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics is important in all type of researches because it a set of rules and values that must be followed while collecting data. Ethical consideration ensures the participation of the respondents is voluntary, knowledgeable and safe for research (Munhall, 1988). Based on ethical considerations, the respondent's anonymity was protected in order to keep their identities secret. Moreover, the researcher confirmed that she would keep their information private, and respondent's names would not be shared. The researcher used pseudo names for all the gym going participants in order to keep their identities confidential. Consent was taken from the respondents before conducting recorded interviews explaining the researcher's purpose of the study. Consent was also taken from the gym owner before taking the pictures of the gym area. It also ensures that the gym going respondents are not forced to address questions that they are uncomfortable with. Respondent physical and emotional safety was also assured. The researcher attempted to obtain natural responses from the respondents.

3.2.15 Problem Faced During Research

During the fieldwork, researcher faced many problems. First, it was very difficult for the researcher to find out the gym. Before, approaching to this gym researcher visited two gyms in Lahore that are not giving their facilities. One is closed because of the maintenance purposes and the other has no staff to deal with clients. Then, the researcher approached this gym but it is far away from the residence of the researcher.

At the start of the research, it was very hard for the researcher to talk to people who are not familiar to the researcher. They start asking from each other who is she? Why she is here? Why she wants to take interviews? They do not believe the researcher that the

conduction of interviews was only for academic purpose and some of the gym going respondents does not let the researcher to record the interviews. The key informants help the researcher in gaining trust of the gym going respondents.

The loud music in the gym is also a biggest problem in the gym because it creates issue in listening to the clear voices of the researcher and the respondent. Researcher also faced a challenge in audio recording of those respondents who allowed for the interview due to loud music.

Further, it was very difficult for the researcher to take interview time from the gym going respondents as one of the respondents named Ali of age-23 who is a YouTuber does not arrive at the gym at his scheduled time for the interview. He changed his time and days many times and the researcher goes before his given time and waits in the gym for his arrival. One day, the researcher reached the gym at 12:00 am and the respondent given time is 4:00 pm for the interview. On reaching the gym one of his friend told me that he has attended the gym in the morning and said that he will give you interview next day at 6:00 pm. Then, the researcher again reached the gym before his given time and he does not come to gym on that day. On asking to his friend he told me that he is out of city due to some urgent work. Then, the researcher said the key informant who told her that Ali used various multivitamins for good body image you may take interview from him. Key informant then again asks Ali to give an interview. He called him and then he gave a new time for the next day. Finally, he comes to the gym on his given time and gives interview to the researcher.

4 MULTIVITAMINS AND POPULAR CULTURE

The main purpose of this chapter is to present empirical findings of the fieldwork carried out at gym. Different tools for data collection were used during the field work including in-depth interviews, FGDs and case studies to document the multifaceted aspects of body shaping and body images. The process of data analysis helps the researcher to analyze the perspectives of gym going youth about the self-medication of multivitamins within their social and cultural setting. All the interviews were recorded with the consent of participants and afterward researcher listened to them and transcribed them for further scrutiny. Later on, diverse codes were formulated for data analysis and then categorized under specific themes. Moreover, the verbatim are quote in quote in the square bracket and the translations of the verbatim are written in parentheses.

4.1 Introduction

The key concern of this chapter is to highlight the understanding of gym going youth about the concept of multivitamins that how they perceive multivitamins. Then, it also explores the nature and types of the multivitamins that which form of multivitamins are used by gym going youth. Additionally, it discusses the influence of popular culture on constructing the perspectives of gym going youth about multivitamins and its impact on youth's consuming practices. It further explores the gym going youth selection and preferences criteria about the use of multivitamins and the reason behind using it. Lastly, the discussion is on the gendering of multivitamins products among gym going youth.

4.2 Understanding Multivitamins

Multivitamins are invention of modern science used to promote health and prevent diseases (Barnes, Bloom, & Nahin, 2008). From an anthropological point of view, multivitamins supplements are understood as part of culture that reflects how different societies construct their beliefs and use the product. Understanding multivitamins also reveals in the context that how gym going youth recognize and approach health, fitness and positive body image in the society by the use of multivitamins. Gym going youth have different perceptions that reflect their social and cultural understanding of multivitamins. Gym going youth also understand multivitamins as a natural and herbal supplement. They perceive multivitamins as a new way medicine that have traditional essence and have no side effects but give

positive results and good body image. My research has found that gym going youth considered multivitamins as the supplements that are made from plants and organic products. Likewise, a male gym going respondent of age-24 name; Hamza says that

Multivitamins are vitamins pills made from natural and herbal products that keep the body more fit and healthy.

Gym going youth maintain their body by using multivitamin but prefer to use multivitamins that is made from natural products. Additionally, during fieldwork at the gym, it discovers that a company³ who offers hundred percent natural and organic products manufacture by different herbs and Aloe Vera⁴ approached the gym. Gym going youth is more interested with natural and herbal ingredients. In Pakistan, traditional ways of treatment that include the use of natural and herbal products was based on the Unani Tibb, Greece and the Arab medication system. The Unani ways follow its beginning back to Hellenistic Greece and goals for treatment of mankind from natural ways in a balanced method. Afterward, it was embraced to Arabs. Later, it was amplified to Europe and Asia. The pharmaceutical of India and China improved it advance (Rafatullah & Alqasoumi, 2008). Around 1350 AD, it multiplied in India beneath the Muslim ruler and is important especially in Pakistan (Shaikh & Hatcher, 2005). Now the traditional ways along with western medical manner are accepted and used worldwide (Yuan, Ma, Ye, & Piao, 2016). Significant portions of the world's valuable medicinal plants diversity are found in underdeveloped countries. In Pakistan, there are plentiful source of organic products. Various multivitamins companies are running their business by developing their products using natural elements (Mirza, Bokhari, & Fatmi, 2015). Pakistan boasts a diverse and abundant flora, comprising nearly 5700 species, of which approximately 2000 are known to possess medicinal properties (Ullah, 2017).

But on contrary, it is find that most of the gym going youth thinks that all the multivitamins are not made up of natural products. But, it is the selling strategy and

³ Forever living products

⁴ It is a plant with succulent leaves.

companies are just playing with people health and body. They are looking for their profits and benefits. They are adding traditional touch to their products. As, during an interview with a gym going female respondent Ayesha of age-27 remarks with a taunting laugh and describes that

Hah! Label the product as natural or herbal to sell it and Pakistani gym youth will buy it easily.

My research also finds that different multivitamins companies and manufacturers frequently invest in marketing campaigns to promote their products and gain consumer attention by labeling it with herbal and natural. Advertisement representations are influenced by the company marketing strategies that intend to maximize sales and market share. During the fieldwork, it has been also observed that different pamphlets and standees of multivitamins products having the label of natural and herbal were also present in gym. Another, gym going male respondent Zain Ali of age-26 says that

Multivitamins are just an allopathic medicine.

In Pakistani society, there is negative association with allopathic medicine because it gives side effects to body and people have positive associations with natural, herbal and homeopathic medicines as it has no side effects to the body (Basili, Lagona, Sarsina, Basili, & Paterna, 2011). Pakistan also possesses traditional medicinal practices that depend on natural and plant based medications. My research finds that multivitamins are viewed by gym going youth as compatible with or a substitute for traditional healing practices that shows great connection of this incorporation on society health beliefs and practices. The usage of multivitamins intersects with traditional practices. Research reveals that gym culture has also a strong impact on gym going youth that influence their choices and actions towards using multivitamins as traditional or modern medicine.

4.2.1 Exercise and Use of Multivitamins

The use of multivitamins is common among gym going youth but they have different understanding perspectives and reasons to utilize multivitamins. Gym going youth perceive

that exercise and the use of multivitamins as addition; can sustain or enhance their general health and body image. They perceive the use of multivitamins is essential with exercise. It has been found that gym going youth used different multivitamins for lessen post-exercise pain. Most of the gym going youth opts to consume multivitamins proactively. It helps them in reducing the feeling of tiredness that occurs due to physical performance. During an interview, Sherish, 22-years old female gym going respondent states

Surbex Z gives a very positive result on my body. In fact, it helps me to alleviate post-exercise pain.

Figure 7: Surbex Z Multivitamin



Source: From Google Images

During the fieldwork, my research has found that “Surbex Z⁵” is the first most prefer multivitamin tablet that is use by most of the gym going youth. It is considering the safest multivitamins among gym going youth for gaining energy, alleviating post-exercise pain and for various other reasons that will be discuss in Chapter#5. Abdullah, a 23-years old gym going male respondents shares his views on the use of “Surbex Z” as

⁵ Name of multivitamin tablet

[Jab exercise ka baad mery bazu or tango ma khaliyan par jati hain to ma surbex Z kha leta hon. Is ma sary multivitamins hoty hain. Surbex Z mery bazu or tango ka khichao ko kaam karny ma help karti ha or muji energy deti ha] (When, I get cramps in my arms and legs after exercise I take Surbex Z. It has all the multivitamins. Surbex Z helps in reducing the cramp in my arms and legs and gives me energy).

He further adds that the multivitamins are produce to gain energy and to relief pain after exercise. My research has found that most of the gym going youth uses multivitamins instead of using pain killer to relief their post-exercise pain. They perceive multivitamin tablet not only compulsory with active workout but they think it give faster results on their body to achieve their desired body goals. Research conducted by (Smith, Morel, & Delgado, 2022) on the use of multivitamins as pain management also explores that pain, cramps and weakness can be treated with the use of various vitamins and minerals. Taking multivitamins are important to stay healthy, having a strong body, staying energetic, and building strong muscles. It also helps with recovering from injuries, reducing muscle pain, and decreasing fatigue (Zeppa et al., 2019).

4.3 Nature and Extent of Multivitamins

Gym going youth prefer to use multivitamins in pill form, some by injection and some in powder form. During the fieldwork, it is observing that while talking interviews most of the gym going respondents consider multivitamins only in tablet form. Multivitamins are mostly preferred in pill and injection form by gym going girls but powder form is also preferred among gym going boys. Some multivitamins are used directly with water and some are water soluble vitamins. Injection form multivitamin is used by most of the gym going youth in milk. Gym going boys who come to gym also use pre-workout supplements for stamina building so that they can exercise energetically. Uzair, 21-years old gym going male respondent who use supplement says that

I use C4 Ripped⁶ almost thirty minutes before workout for taking energy and building stamina.

Figure 8: C4 Ripped Supplement



Source: Author, 2023

He further added that he uses one level scoop by mixing it in water. The above figure also shows that “Cellular C4 Ripped” is a pre-workout powder form supplement that is used by most of the gym going boys to gain energy and stamina. Stamina building enforces most of gym going boys to use “Cellular C4 Ripped” that can give them energy and help in their stamina building for better performance. Energy is interrelated with feeling of capacity, stamina and strength that helps to perform daily physically and mentally tasks. Multivitamins supplements are also used to build stamina and energy among gym going people (Tardy, Pouteau, Marquez, Yilmaz, & Scholey, 2020).

⁶ C4 Ripped is a branded product of Cellucor Company. It is powdered form supplement that is used for energy management and strength before workout.

It has been also observed that most of the gym going male respondents use supplements in powdered form, especially those who attend the gym for body building purpose. Informal discussions with gym trainers also reveals that gym going males who are more concerned about their body building and who want to participate in sports use a variety of supplements before, during and after workout. Gym going youth is also using more than one multivitamin to fulfill all the vitamins requirement of the body.

4.3.1.1 Case Study of a Gym Going Respondent using Multiple Multivitamin

Supplement of Different Nature and Extent

Ali Ahmed, a 23-years old gym going respondent shared his case that he has been taking “Iron One” as prescribed by his doctor for the past year. He shared that initially, the recommendation was for a three-month period to address his iron deficiency and boost his hemoglobin (Hb) level. He mentioned that surprisingly, the effects have been so positive that he continued taking it, and now, it has become a crucial part of his routine. He said that his body has adapted well to this multivitamin supplement, and he have experienced a significant improvement in his energy level. He stated that skipping the iron tablet leaves him feeling tired and low throughout the day. He shared that the consistency in taking “Iron One” has contributed to maintaining his body shape and health. In addition to the iron supplement, He decided to join the gym on the recommendation of his best friend to stay active and work on gaining weight. He mentioned that he was also under weight and face a lot of criticism on his body from family and friends. He said, at the time of joining, he weighed 39 kg, and he was 22 years old. He mentioned that he is motivated by his desire to transform his body and he incorporated “Iron One” and also started using “D3 injection” every fifteen days for bone strength. He said that the results have been so positive after following consistent routine, and his weight has increased to 51 kg, and he is now 23 years old. He shared that the combination of “Iron One” and “D3 injection” has not only helped him to achieve his desired weight but has also given positive body image with good body shape. He was very excited with his body transformation and the positive feedback from my family and friends’ ads to his joy.

4.3.2 Selection of Branded and Local Multivitamins Products

The selection of multivitamins among gym going youth depends on the branded and local multivitamins products. Most gym going youth prefer to use imported and branded products. The strong influence of brand culture is observed among gym going youth. It is very common among gym going youth especially boys to use branded multivitamins like “GNC⁷” and “Centrum⁸”. They have a strong connection with brands because they believe that products from good brands can give them good health and body image. They do not want to harm their body health and appearance by using local products of Pakistan as during an interview, 22-years old, Umair says

Pakistani local products are not good. In the beginning, the quality of the products is very good and they advertise well to become famous and when they become famous they drop their quality later. So, I am not in favor of using local products. Branded products should be used as they maintain the quality of their products. I am using GNC Weight Gainer⁹ for gaining weight. Anyhow, its cost is Rs 25000 but I am getting my results on my body.

Figure 9: GNC Pro Performance Weight Gainer Supplement



Source: From Google Images

⁷ US Nutritional supplements multivitamin brand

⁸ American multivitamin brand

⁹ Name of multivitamin supplement

The above figure also shows that branded “GNC Pro Performance Weight Gainer” supplement have all the details on the bottle. It contains 73g proteins, 2200 calories and 440 carbs¹⁰ that play a vital role in gaining weight among gym going youth. It was also observed that even in Pakistani society, brand culture is also considering as more trustworthy by the consumers because of the quality and standard of their products. There are also “GNC” multivitamin supplement shops available in Pakistan that deal only with “GNC” products including nutrition, sports and energy related products.

Most of the gym going respondents, who belongs to elite class easily affords branded multivitamins and supplements. They consider local products as low in quality and bad on health and have no proper details mention on the products. My research has also found that most of the gym going youth was also criticizing the local products of multivitamins companies.

But on contrary, it has been also observed that many of the gym going youth is also using Pakistani multivitamins products like “Nutrifactor”. Local products are easily available at any medical stores and have reasonable prices like during an interview, a 20-years old female respondent, name Sadia says that

I use Nutrifactor¹¹ Magnesium because it contains sixty tablets for two months in just nine hundred which means I am getting magnesium in almost five hundred a month and gain positive results on my body.

The above statement means that one can easily get all the multivitamins and fulfill their desired body demands also by using a local multivitamin brand in a reasonable price than why a person can use costly multivitamin that only used for one month.

She further adds that she uses “Nutrifactor Magnesium” daily after exercise by her own will. She thinks that she has a magnesium deficiency because if she does not use “Nutrifactor Magnesium” it causes her body weakness. Magnesium suits her body and she further adds that she is satisfied with the use of local product because she is

¹⁰ Carbohydrates

¹¹ Nutrifactor is a local Pakistani multivitamin company

getting positive result according to her body demand after the use of multivitamin supplements.

Figure 10: Nutrifactor Magnesium Multivitamin



Source: From Google Images

The above image shows no such details that are present on the branded multivitamin supplement bottle. The estimation made by the World Health Organization (WHO) reveals that over two billion individuals across the globe suffer from inadequacies in the consumption of crucial nutrients and minerals (Allen, De Benoist, Dary, & Hurrell, 2006). The report of World Health Organization (WHO) (1998) also highlighted that sensible self-medication can aid in the prevention and management of illnesses that do not require medical discussion, offering a more economical option for addressing routine ailments. However, it is the individual's foremost duty to ensure proper usage of self-medication products. All stakeholders involved in self-medication must be cognizant of the advantages and drawbacks of any such product (World Health Organization (WHO), 1998).

My research has found that taking a local company pill in a day is a much easier and cheaper way to get all the multivitamins for gym going youth if it has no proper detail like branded products have. It has been also found that gym going youth is using both local and branded multivitamins according to their status, affordability and demand of their bodies. Moreover, most of the gym going youth also believes that the purpose of taking multivitamins do not depend on the local and branded products. Its purpose is only to supplement their body with all the vitamins and achieve their body goals by its use.

4.4 Advertisement and Consumer Culture

Social media platforms have emerged as potent instruments for publicize information, affecting consumer choices and creating fashion (Curran & Hesmondhalgh, 2019). In the case of multivitamins, social media and advertising tactics shape attitudes, endorse the concept of self-care and establish multivitamins as a voguish and modern solution for fulfilling nutritional requirements and body goals. The social media has a significant impact on influencing consumer behavior.

My research finds that advertisements shown on televisions are often perceived as dependable sources of information and are subject to regulatory guidelines that guarantee their claim, safety and accuracy. Hence, the advertisement of “CaC-1000 Plus” on television is perceived by most of the gym going youth in the context of safety and credibility and it affect their consuming choices. During an interview, a 33-years old gym going male respondent name; Usama says

I saw an ad for Calcium-1000 plus on T.V. It is safe to use that is why it is being shown on the media.

Figure 11: CaC-1000 Plus Water Soluble Multivitamin



Source: From Google Images

The above figure shows that “CaC-1000 plus” is water soluble multivitamins that not only contain calcium but also vitamin D₃. It is found that gym going youth not only use “CaC-1000 plus” for calcium purpose but they also use it for taking vitamin D. It is

also the second most commonly use multivitamin supplement among gym going youth. According to most of the gym going youth it is believed that the advertisement of “CaC-1000 plus” on television not only gives them the message to consume calcium daily but also inspire them to make the bones strong. Gym going youth is highly influenced by the multivitamins that are shown through advertisement on television and considered them the authentic source that give benefit to their bodies.

Similarly, actor and actress are also hired to promote the product that also comes under the marketing and advertisement strategy. It also affects gym going youth consuming behavior. During an interview, with a gym going female respondent of age-21 name; Noor express that

I saw advertisement of Nutrifactor on Facebook and Instagram given by Sarah Khan ¹²then I decided to try it because she is my favorite actor.

Figure 12: Nutrifactor Multivitamin



Source: From Google Images

Platforms such as Facebook and Instagram are strong tools for advertising and influencer marketing. Facebook is used by 14.5% of engaged social media users as their preferred social platform, whereas 14.6% opt Instagram. The influencer culture has provided celebrities and notable personalities with a direct means to connect with their fan

¹² Sarah Khan who is also known as Sarah Falak is a Pakistani Urdu television actress.

and display their way of life and choices. These special associations established by social media strengthen the impact of celebrity endorsements, as fans recognize them as more genuine and relatable source to gain a better lifestyle and positive body image. Celebrity endorsements strike into emotions and desires. Advertisements frequently employ influential techniques to elicit a positive emotional response, such as enthusiasm, admiration or a desire to be linked with the endorsed product. Celebrity endorsements have been employed as a marketing strategy to influence consumer choices (Kiran & Pratim, 2014).

By connecting Nutrifactor with Sarah Khan's amiable persona, the advertisement may have successfully triggered affirmative feelings, development a taste to try the product and make the body like her. By linking a prominent and admired figure like Sarah Khan with a product, companies try to develop the star's popularity and positive body image to produce a bond between the celebrity and the product. These connections produce attention, faith, and desire among fans and followers. The social media and advertisement capitalizes on cultural trend by positioning the product as a way to proactively control one's health and body image.

The promotion and publicity of multivitamins can be regarded as a demonstration of how specific cultural convictions and methods concerning fitness and body image are influenced and sustained through the market financial system. Multivitamin products are promoted as a means of providing the positive body image with crucial nutrients that cannot be acquired from diet alone. Marketing of multivitamins develop cultural beliefs about the products that fitness and body image are attained by individual accountability and personal preferences. It is also influenced by environmental and social factors.

In addition, multivitamin marketing frequently incorporates gendered aspects by aiming at specific male and female demographics, as well as varying age groups. This illustrates how social perceptions of gender and age impact the conceptualization and promotion of fitness and positive body image. The marketing and advertising of multivitamins frequently employs expressions and visuals that appeal to a sense of control over an individual's fitness and welfare, along with notions of body perfection and

appearance. Diverse tag lines also highlight the notion of managing one's health and nourishing the physique with the supreme multivitamins (Franchina & Lo Coco, 2018).

4.5 Gendering of Products

Gendering of products is based on the use of various energy drinks and the multivitamins. My research has found that most of the gym going youth also maintains their activeness through the use of energy drinks. During the focus group discussion it has been also found that gym going females also used “Sting¹³” and “Red bull¹⁴”. On contrary, male respondents disagree with the use of energy drink by females because according to them energy drinks are made only for young boys so that they can get instant energy. They also think that energy drinks are not good for gym going girl's health because it affects their fertility. They have to reproduce and energy drinks give very fast reaction that is not good for female health and body. Moreover, they validate their argument by saying that in the advertisement of energy drinks male character was chosen to advertise. Similarly, there are various multivitamins that are specifically made for men then why girls do not use men multivitamins. Correspondingly, a gym going male respondent Waleed of age 22-years says that

Sometimes I drink red bull for gaining energy but I use Centrum Men¹⁵ daily to remain energetic after exercise.

Globally, the utilization of dietary supplements and multivitamins is on the rise in the general populace. In 2010, there was a probable escalation of 30-50% in the consumption of energy drinks and dietary supplements among gym people to gain instant energy (Seifert, Schaechter, Hershorin, & Lipshultz, 2011). Young enthusiasts have turned their attention to diverse varieties of dietary supplements and multivitamins for rapid and reliable outcomes (Jahan et al., 2018). The figure below of “Centrum Men” also shows that the product is also gender specific.

¹³ Name of energy drink

¹⁴ Name of energy drink

¹⁵ Name of multivitamin tablet that is used by men

Figure 13: Centrum Men Multivitamin/ Multimineral Supplement



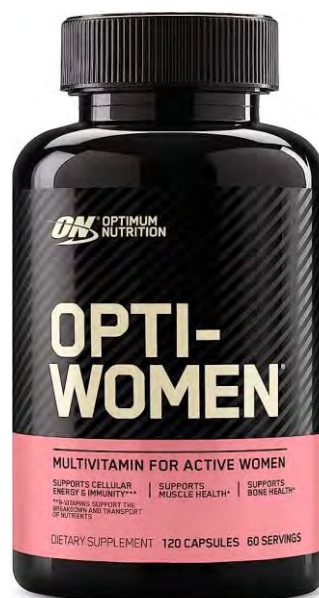
Source: From Google Images

But, it has been observed in Pakistani society energy drink including “red bull” or “sting” is used by both males and females. As, 34-years old, another gym going married female respondent name; Meerab says that

I like to try energy drinks and I usually drink sting just for tongue taste, however I maintain my active lifestyle by exercising and use Opti-Women ¹⁶ daily to stay energetic so I can manage daily tasks.

Gym going girls are also using energy drinks they do not believe that it is only for males. Some are using it for tongue taste and some use it after exercise to gain energy as most of the gym going boys do. Gym going girls do not believe that energy drinks gives infertility to them they also think that it is just an energy drink that is use by both genders to gain energy. It has been observed that the bottle of energy drinks only mention that it cannot be consume by pregnant women, otherwise the gender is not specifically mentioned on it. The below figure of “Opti-Women” suggests that the multivitamin is only for women to be active.

¹⁶ ON (Optimum Nutrition), Opti-Women multivitamin tablet that is used by women

Figure 14: Opti-Women Multivitamin

Source: From Google Images

Conversely, both gym going youth including males and females understand and practice the difference of multivitamins because of the role of media in gendering the products. My research has found that in Pakistani society, the media has a great influence on the gendering of products that influence consumer culture (Bashir, Mansha, & Raja, 2022). Additionally, both gym going males and females prefer multivitamins over energy drinks. They maintain their active lifestyles by using multivitamins.

4.6 Conclusion

In the light of the above discussion, gym going youth have different perspectives that reflects their local understanding of multivitamins. In Pakistani society, both types of perspectives revolve around multivitamins some gym going youth perceive it in a cultural context and some are highly influenced by popular culture and consider it a modern Western medicine. Multivitamins have gain consideration through popular culture including advertisements, social media platforms and influencers, digital media, print media and electronic media. In Pakistani society, due to popular culture multivitamins have a great impact on gym going youth. It influences their perceptions about positive body

image, health, body aesthetic and self-care. In Pakistani society, multivitamins and gym culture shows how much people care about living their best lives and taking care of themselves. Gym going youth used and understand multivitamins in their own ways due to different reasons. Some gym going youth are using multivitamins to gain energy and to reduce post-exercise pain and some are using it to gain good health and their desired body goals.

5 GYM CULTURE OF BODY SHAPING AND THE USE OF MULTIVITAMINS

5.1 Introduction

The major concern of this chapter is to discuss the gym going youth beliefs about body images and how gym going youth achieve their desire body goals through the use of multivitamins as self-medication. It begins with the explanation of body image in the gym culture then discuss the societal perspectives about body image and the purpose of gym going youth to join the gym and the use of various multivitamins. It further illustrates the body ideals. It also talks about the body competition that exists between gym going boys and girls due to various factors. It also discusses the aspects of body adornment that focus on body appearance including dressing, healthy skin and the use of cosmetics. Finally, this chapter describes the dietary behaviors that exist between gym going youth and the use of multivitamins.

5.2 Cultural Construction of Beauty

The construction of beauty is a multifaceted phenomenon that varies across various societies. Beauty ideals are not universal but are the product of social constructs, power structures, social hierarchies, influenced by cultural norms, values and practices. The belief that a healthy look reflects beauty is deeply ingrained in cultural narratives and expectation.

At the end of twentieth century, due to media the focus of beauty was shifted to slim body figure. Western media promote a specific slender body shape that is adopted by non-western countries. Western media creates values that generate the surge to adopt the slender body shape and concept of adoration of youngness, glorification of beauty and believing that bodies can be change and develop thoughts that it is good and essential to work on the body (Bindhani, 2021). Due to the globalization of beauty industry, the perceptions of male and female about the beauty also became global and influence on various societies and cultures (Egbert & Belcher, 2012).

In Pakistani society, due to print and electronic media the fashion industry has focused the concept of beauty for both male and females. The center of attention of beauty

shifted to slender body shape and appearance of a person. It depends on that how people appear according to the beauty expectations of the society. The term beauty often means the appearance of a female body and handsome is related to the males who have good looking body. The standards of beauty also shape the gym going youth perceptions. But, to understand the perceptions of gym going youth about their positive body image lets understand their social and cultural expectations about their body appearances and the use of multivitamins to gain their desire body goals. Gym going youth are also influenced by media and adopting the features that make their appearance attractive. They strive to meet them through the use of multivitamins.

My research has found that most of the gym going male has some beauty demand from the girls as one of the gym going male Haider of age-28 says that

[motti larkiyān nai achi lagti. Motapa wesī bimariyon ki jur hota ha. Larkiyān na zada motti, na patli achi lagti hain. Normal honi chahiya ta ka dekhny me b beautiful or samajdar lagain. Hourglass physique ya slender body honi chahiya or apni appearance ko maintain rakha hona chahiya] (fat girls do not look good. Obesity is the root of diseases. Girls look good, not too fat, and not too thin. Should be normal so as to look beautiful and intelligent. Should have hourglass physique or slender physique and maintain their appearance).

The above statement shows the cultural construction of beauty from boys to girls. They find these characteristic that they want to have in their life partner. Moreover, the plump physique was first related to the sexuality and fertility. But, now in Pakistani society, obesity is consider negatively even the gym going youth associate fat body with diseases and calls it obesity. They consider fat girls as suffering from diseases. Even doctor recommends the fat or obese people to lose their weight first (Walsh, Grech, & Hill, 2019). In Pakistani culture, people are also influenced by Western culture and like slender body shape of girls.

Gym going girls are also transforming their body by the use of multivitamins and exercise to meet the beauty standards that are constructed in the society. In Pakistani

society, smartness, beauty and intelligence of a girls is associated with a thin, slender and hourglass body.

Figure 15: Hourglass Body Figure



Source: Author, 2023

The above figure shows the success story of a gym going girl name Menahil of age-27 who gain hourglass body figure by using various multivitamin and exercise because this physique is the demand of Pakistani society. These types of transformation attract society and give positive energy to the people that they can also achieve it with the use of multivitamins and exercise.

Conversely, gym going girls have also certain beauty standards for boys. Most gym going girls want boys with tall height, good muscles and body because they associate these features with attractiveness and handsome personality. Moreover, they do not like boys

with chubby bellies either. In Pakistan, girls prefer tall boys because it gives smart impression. A female gym going respondent, Aneeqa of age-19 states that

Boy's muscles and body should be attractive; height should be six feets. I do not like boys with short height and fat belly.

Figure 16: Attractive Body of a Gym Going Boy



Source: Author, 2023

The above figure shows a body of Qasim, a 26-years old gym going boy. His physique is like by gym going youth and society due to his body height, bulky muscles and normal belly. Most of the gym going boys even comes to the gym to achieve this kind of body image as it gives them attractive figure and handsome personality. Gym going youth use multivitamins supplements as a shortcut to achieve and maintain a certain body shape and meet the culturally constructed beauty standards. Cultural beliefs contribute to the normalization and desirability of using multivitamins to meet cultural beauty standards.

My research has found that appearance is not only the matter for girls but it is also becoming more concerned with boys now. Gym going boys and girls has also expectation of beauty and body from opposite gender. For this reason, the gym going boys are strongly and regularly recognizing their physiques as a project to work on. They used various multivitamins to gain muscle mass and good body image along with exercise. Societal beauty standards tell the people to meet the criteria of beauty that how to look (Murnen & Don, 2012).

5.2.1 Societal Appreciations

Societal appreciations refer to love and acceptance of one's body. Anthropologically, growing up in society affects how a person feels about themselves, their body, and their appearance. This happens when a person talks and spend time with their family, friends, and the things he sees on media, social platforms, and surroundings that shape your behavior and beliefs about body image. In Pakistani society, the way a person look is tied to what it means to be a man or a woman, making certain gender roles and expectations. The way people are taught to think and feel about beauty, and how they make it a part of themselves, also affects how society views body image.

During the fieldwork, it was found that societal appreciation is also the one of reason of self-medication with multivitamins because when gym going youth get compliments about their body images and appearances from their family, friends and society they get motivation. My research has found that most of the gym going boys uses multivitamins to meet the criteria of society so that they are liked by their friends, family and society. During an interview, 18-years old, Raffay a male gym going respondent says that

I like it when people in my society and my friends especially girls like my six-pack abs. I think by using One A Day Men's¹⁷ and C4 Ripped; I have not only get a good body image but also a good personality.

He further adds that he uses "C4 Ripped" to burn fat of his body and "One A Day Men's" for muscles functions during exercise.

¹⁷ One A Day Men's is a multivitamin multimineral supplement.

Figure 17: One A Day Men's Multivitamin



Source: From Google Images

The above figure of “One A Day Men’s Multivitamin” shows that this multivitamin is not only used for muscles function, but it is also used for gaining energy, heart health, immune health, cell health and healthy blood pressure. My research has found that different multivitamins provides multiple benefits to the body and these benefits are also mentioned on the multivitamins bottles as shown in the above figure. However, gym going youths have a specific purpose of using this product even though it is design for more than one purpose.

Similarly, “Cellular C4 Ripped” is used for gaining energy by gym going youth as discussed in chapter#4. But, it is also used for fat burning especially by that gym going youths who wants to build six-pack abs. However, my research has found that building six-pack abs is not only the thing. Gym going boys also have to burn their overall body fats so that the fat layers between abdominal muscles and skin does not hide their abs. Gym going youth relates their six-pack abs with good body image and health. They think that building six-pack abs make their body attractive and give them good personality that is the demand of girls and our Pakistani society.

Figure 18: Six-Pack Abs



Source: Author, 2023

The above figure shows the body of a gym going boy who build six-pack abs. It is found that when these types of body images appreciated in the Pakistani society it motivates young boys to join the gym. Then, they use various multivitamins supplements to gain their desire goals in a short span of time. It was also found that societal appreciation about positive body image is also the reason to use multivitamins as self-medication by gym going youth.

On contrary, it has been found that fat women are judged by others based on their body size and shape because they do not meet societal criteria of body image, but if they achieve these standards by exercising and taking multivitamins people also asks them that how they achieve it. As, during an interview a 26-years old, Amna, one of the married female respondents says that

My weight was 80 kg now it is 60 kg. I got such a good result after joining the gym. My family members used to call me motti (fat), Now, I like it, when

they are telling me that you are looking beautiful after getting smart and ask how did you lose weight? I have worked hard, go for morning walk and follow a strict diet. After workout, I also take one Slow Mag¹⁸ daily as it helps me to reduce tiredness or weakness and keep my body healthy.

My research has found that fatness is related to ugly impression. Mocking, taunting, using abusive words and making fun of people based on their appearance are common practices in Pakistani society. It is a mindset of people that a good personality person is active, thin and strong while the fat ones are judged as lazy and inactive.

Figure 19: Slow Mag 20 Fizzies Magnesium



Source: From Google Images

The above figure shows that “Slow Mag 20 fizzies Magnesium” is a water soluble multivitamin. My research has found that tiredness and weakness also impact on the physical body and after exercise “Slow Mag” multivitamin help most of the gym going youth rapid recovery to make their body feel physically and mentally better.

¹⁸ Slow Mag 20 fizzies Magnesium multivitamin

Figure 20: Body Image Transformation



Source: Author, 2023

The above figure shows the transformation from weight loss to a thin body shape. In Pakistani society, girls' body is also considered as a foundation of getting a good partner. Most of the gym going girls comes to gym to lose weight according to the standards of Pakistani society, that a thin girl gets a handsome man. Furthermore, if gym going youth especially girls, achieve their body goal, they are appreciated by Pakistani society and become a motivation for other girls and set the standards for others to achieve.

My research has found that success stories of weigh lose, weight gain and six-pack abs building and muscles building floats in Pakistani society and motivate young boys and girls to join gym.

5.2.2 Societal Pressure and Motivation to Join Gym

Men feel pressured to meet up the masculine ideals, such as having a muscular and toned physique, while women may be subjected to beauty standards that prioritize thinness and a particular body shape. This can foster an environment where individuals particularly

females may feel scrutinized and objectified. During the FGDs, a 28-years old, married male respondent, Haider says

When I was underweight many people used to call me [7up ka cartoon ¹⁹] (7up cartoon) because of my physique. I feel so bad but I pretend normal in front of many people because they are my elders and I have to respect them. I was not liked by our society due to underweight. Our society can accept girls with skinny figure but not boys. Then, I joined gym and start using GNC Mega Men Multi ²⁰ on the recommendation of gym trainer for the support of physical performance, muscle building and good body image. Now, MashaAllah²¹ I am 66kg.

Most of the gym going boys joined gym because they feel societal pressure on them due to their underweight. Skinny men are not only criticized by abusive and taunting words but they are also associated with cartoon characters. In Pakistan, it is observe that skinny person associates with skeleton and various cartoon characters like if a couple look smart and fat then they were called as *Motu Patlu ki Jodi* ²²(Motu Patlu couple). Before research, I thought that in Pakistan men did not care much about their physique but society has set scale of measurement to judge the people by the category of under, over and normal weight. Moreover, it is also the indication that skinny boys are also not liked by girls as their life partner.

The below figure of “GNC Mega Men Essentials One Daily Multi” is used by most of the gym going boys to build muscles. It has been observed that due to taunting words most of the skinny gym going boys feel pressure on them and use multivitamins to enhance their muscles and bodies for good body image.

¹⁹ It is a male cartoon character whose name is Fido Dido. It seems to be very slim and smart.

²⁰ GNC Mega Men Essentials One Daily Multi is a multivitamin and multimineral.

²¹ Mashallah is an expression in the Arabic language (مَاشَاءَ أُمِّ) that conveys a sense of amazement or admiration for a person, event or achievements.

²² Motu Patlu is an Indian animated cartoon.

Figure 21: GNC Mega Men Essentials One Daily Multivitamin



Source: From Google Images

During the FGDs, a 32-years old, married female respondent, Kiran says

[Zalim log! Punjabi ho banda or mota b na ho? Hahaha!] (Cruel people! Be a Punjabi²³ man and not fat? Hah!) After marriage, when I visited Northern areas with my family it was impossible for me to climb the mountains. I weighed 80 kg. My family used to make fun of me and people's eyes told a lot about my body language. After returning, my husband asked me to join gym. Now, it's been one year to join gym and I am sixty kg.

In Pakistan, *Punjabis* are known for their bulky bodies that are associated with good health and prosperity. My research found that overweight *Punjabi* people also face social judgment and pressure because of their extra weight and physical shape. The judgmental reactions by family and scrutiny of other people highlight the impact of cultural standards on individual bodies, happiness and self-esteem. In Pakistan, it has been also observed that most of the girls join the gym especially before their marriage. They want to lose weight so that they can look pretty and smart on their wedding day and people do not

²³ Individual who resides in the region of Punjab are called Punjabi.

talk negative about their body shape and appearance. My research has found that society has set criteria for both men and women

5.3 Body Ideals

Body ideals play a significant role in society that determines beauty perceptions, attractiveness, and desirability about positive body image. Anthropologically, body ideals are set of cultural standards that determine how people ideally appear attractive and accepted by society. As, most of the gym going youth have their body ideals and want to build their body like them. Some gym going youth make their ideas from Bollywood²⁴ and some from Lollywood. They are highly influenced by the depiction of actor or actress in media. During FGDs, while talking about the body ideals with a gym going male respondent, Zain Ali of aged-26 says

[Muji Salman Khan jesi personality or body achi lagti ha] (I like personality and body similar to Salman Khan²⁵).

The above statement means that the interviewee is influenced by the personality and body image of Salman Khan who depicts him as a charismatic hero with a macho image. Salman Khan is frequently linked with the concept of masculinity owing to his robust and muscular body. His physical attributes, frequently displayed in action packed sequences and shirtless scenes are widely admired and have been a benchmark for some people to aspire to (Gupta, 2016). My research has found that media representation of specific body types and personalities influences body image ideals and the beliefs of gym going youth. It has been also observed that the participant was also wearing a chain bracelet with blue stone in his hand that Salman Khan also wear and it is commonly seen on media. On contrary, during FGDs, a gym going girl, Hibba of age-25 states

[kiya hi baat ho meri body be Ayeza Khan jesi ho jaya. Wo kahi sa do bachon ki maa lagti ha. Muji dekho shaadi be nai hovi or teen bacho ki

²⁴ Bollywood is the famous film industry situated in India (Mumbai)

²⁵ Salman Khan is a Bollywood star, movie maker and television screen icon who mainly focuses on acting in Indian films.

maa lagti ho] (What if my body also becomes like Ayeza Khan²⁶. She looks like a mother of two from no angle. Look at me, I am not even married and I look like a mother of three children).

It has been found that gym going girls are influenced by Lollywood²⁷ actresses. Most of the gym going girls makes Pakistani actresses their ideals. In Pakistani society, it has been observed that unmarried girls are often criticized for looking older than their age; just because of their overweight and body structure. On contrary, in Pakistan if a person looks younger than their age it is also consider a compliment for him/her. In relation to one's body ideals, gym going youth resort to multivitamins in the anticipation that it will enhance their looks or tackle their body concerns.

5.4 Body Competition

Body building competitions is a social phenomenon that is based on the human physical body shape. A body competition is the display of people's dedication and hard work in shaping their bodies to be exceptionally fit. Anthropologically, body competitions examine that how it advanced over time, their social significance, and the energetic interplay between aesthetic standard and the effort individuals put into improving their body. Various cultures have beliefs about body shaping linked with masculinity and femininity that impact the atmosphere within fitness centers. Body competition also manifests through interaction among gym going youth. Men determined by their physical strength and athletic performance. During an interview, Zuhair a male respondent of age-32 states

[Achi body bandy ki toor hoti ha. Meri body ka competition mery Kabaddi fellows ka sath ha, or Kababddi khelnay ka liya muscles achy bany hony chahiya. Mjy Kabaddi Khelnay ka bohat shok ha or me muscles mass gain krny ka liya MuscleTech whey protein use krta hon] (A good body is a personality of a person. I have competition of body image with my

²⁶ Ayeza Khan whose real name is Kanza Khan. She is a model and actress from Pakistan. She predominantly works in Urdu Television.

²⁷ Lollywood is the famous Pakistan's film industry based in Lahore.

Kabaddi²⁸ fellows. To play kabaddi, the muscles should be well formed. I am very fond of playing kabaddi, and use MuscleTech whey protein ²⁹to gain muscle mass).

Within the realm of bodybuilding, it is perceived as a manifestation of cultural standards and anticipations regarding bodily aesthetics and masculinity. In Pakistani cultures, there exists a dominant conviction that a strong and well sculpted figure epitomizes power, status, personality and intelligence (Harmanci & Okray, 2021). Most of the gym going males agrees with the above statement, adding that it is not just personality, but status and intelligence. Young people at the gym used multivitamins as enhancement drugs in accordance with cultural norms reinforced by media portrayals of modernity of the perfect body.

My research also found that most of the gym going males who are in body competition also used “MuscleTech whey protein” as self-medication to meet the physical standards that are constructed in Pakistani society related to sports. They improve their body performance and appearance not for sports but also with their gym fellows. My research has found that the bodies that build in the gym culture are also recognized there but the encouragement reward is given to you by the society. During FGDs, 22-years gym going female respondent, Mahnoor says

I want to become a boxer and want to be a part of Pakistan Women's National Boxing Team. There is another girl in the gym who also wants to be a part of boxing but I want to appear better in body image. I have competition with her and currently, I am improving my weight and using Surbex Z. I will adopt my body to the demands of boxing.

Gym going girls who also wants to be a part of sports are also in physical competition and use various multivitamins supplements. Most of the gym going girls has also competition with each other especially in losing weight. My research has found that

²⁸ Kabaddi is the cultural sport of Pakistan. It consists of two teams; each contain seven players. In this game, players alternate in pursuing and tapping members of the rival team without getting caught by them.

²⁹ MuscleTech Nitro Tech Ripped Whey Protein is a muscle mass gainer.

gym culture empowers women by providing a safe and inclusive environment where they can engage not only in body shaping but also in physical activities. Conversely, women face examination, body shaming based on their appearance or perceived capabilities. As, during a FGDs, Waleed a 30-years old gym going male respondent says

A boxer girl is not good looking. A girl is charmingly cute and looks beautiful but, must be strong inside.

The above statement means that girls do not be like by boys if they build their bodies and want to part of sports like boxing. But, if she does that, she seems unnatural and question that how can she do that with her identity? In Pakistani society, it is a common practice to associate professions with gender like a firefighter will be a man and nurse will be women (Thebaud & Doering, 2017). Similarly, some sports are also associated with gender as during the fieldwork, it has been also observed that men are preparing their bodies for *Kabaddi* because according to them it is the sports that are played by men.

My research has found that concept of inner and outer beauty is present here. The words attractive, cute, smart, sexy, hot, beautiful are commonly associated with girls' identities by observing her from outer appearance but most of the male gym going youth want the girls to be stronger from inside. However, gym going girls use various multivitamins supplements for maintaining their inner and outer beauty. My research has found that most of the gym going male youth accepts girls if they join the gym only for positive body image, fitness, body shape and weight loss.

5.5 Body Adornment

Beauty of body image is not only depending on the weight loss, weight gain and body building purpose. It depends on the beautiful designs of tattoos, piercing that not only depicts the creativity of that culture but also shows how people use these things to express their beliefs, and identities. Male gym going youth is also interested to make their body more attractive but in some different way. Gym going boys are using multivitamins to make their muscles enhanced so that they can make tattoos that represent strength, masculinity and attractiveness among girls. Zia, male respondent of age-34 says

I am using Whey protein³⁰ to make my muscles a little bigger and then I am going to build eagle tattoos on them to make my body look more attractive and beautiful.

During the fieldwork, it has been found that most of the gym going male respondents are using whey protein to gain muscle mass for the purpose of body adornment. The users gain information about whey protein mostly from their gym fellows and trainers as it contains 30 grams of proteins that helps to gain 70 percent more muscles instantly and increase physical strength and performance also shown in the below figure.

Figure 22: MuscleTech Whey Protein



Source: From Google Images

Different tattoo designs have different meanings as the eagle tattoo represents power and strength (Buss & Hodges, 2017). My research has found that Pakistan is a patriarchal society where strength and power is related with masculinity and to depict it symbolically gym going youth is making tattoos on their body. It also increases their body aesthetic and gives them positive body image. It is also known that people with tattoos

³⁰ MuscleTech whey protein

show their tattoos to the world to represent the body adornment and the meaning behind that tattoo (Kang & Jones, 2007).

The below figure shows the image of a gym going boy who also have tattoo on his leg for the purpose of body adornment. It is also observed that most of the gym going boys has tattoos on their different parts of the body to make their bodies attractive, beautiful and to fulfill the fashion trend.

Figure 23: Body Adornment by Tattoo Making



Source: Author, 2023

Gym going boys internalize tattoo making from their gym fellows and the posters or painting on the walls of the gym to make their body attractive and beautiful. In Pakistani society, it is observed that tattoo making is also becoming the part of culture and fashion.

Figure 24: Tattoo Poster on the Wall of Gym



Source: Author, 2023

The above figure shows that during the fieldwork, even on the walls of the gym there were different images of males that have tattoos on them for making their body attractive and beautiful. The concept of body adornment among gym going boys are not only related with lean muscle building but also with tattoos making.

On contrary, it has been also observed that gym going girls are not interested in tattooing on their body for religious reasons; rather they want to have multiple piercings on their ears for body adornment. In Pakistan, tattoo making is considered *haram* (forbidden) because it involves altering the natural creation of Allah and is not permitted by Islam (Rokib & Sodiq, 2017). My research revealed that modernity has a profound effect on gym going youth as they are adopting the values of Western cultures and make changes in their physical appearance by using multivitamins to achieve a standard of beauty in a society.

5.5.1 Healthy Skin, Hair and Use of Cosmetics

Hair, skin and use of cosmetics are the components that are perceived as the aspects of everyday life that shows significant experiences into human personality, expression, and the dynamic connections between people and their social interactions. The cultural

significance of body adornment and use of cosmetics like makeup, skin, hair and dressing highlights the role of gym going youth in using multivitamins and the formation of identity and conformity to cultural norms to meet beauty standards.

During the fieldwork, it has been also observed that beauty for gym going girls is not only related to physical fitness but also depends on hair, nails, skin and cosmetics. It has been found that most of the gym going girl are highly influenced by the media that plays a huge role in portraying the beauty standards in the society. Along with body aesthetic and attractiveness; women also used make up to make their look better and to beautify themselves. During an interview, Kiran, a 32-years old gym going female respondent says

I use Silica Complex ³¹for hair, skin and nails because along with physical fitness and appearance, the beauty of the body also depends on the skin, hair and makeup.

Gym going girls use multivitamins supplements and cosmetics to enhance their physical features that involves to improve hair, skin and nails for multiple inspirations like sexually charming, younger, fascinating more polished and well-maintained. Various multivitamins companies are also developing products targeting not only physical fitness but also skin, hair and nails that develop the need in the people to become beautiful and enhance (Russell, 2003).

Figure 25: NOW Silica Complex



Source: Form Google Images

³¹ NOW Silica Complex is a multivitamin supplement.

The above figure of “Silica Complex” also shows that it not only supports skin, hair and nails but is also good for joints. Similarly, Warda, another gym going girl of age-23 says

I use Evion capsule³² oil on my face to get better and white skin because boys like girls who have fair complexion.

Figure 26: Evion (Vitamin E) Capsule



Source: From Google Images

The above figure shows that, “Evion” is a vitamin E capsule. It is in oil form that is used by gym going girls to apply directly on their face for fair complexion. In order to meet the beauty standards and to maintain the beauty status in society gym going youth use “Evion (Vitamin E) capsule” not for the intrinsic benefits but also for the extrinsic benefits. It has also been found that multivitamins are not only used in oral form for different purposes as the alternate and easy way but is also used to apply on face especially for beauty purpose. My research has also found that gym going youth are using multivitamins oil on their skin so that when they apply makeup on their face it gives them natural and fine look that is appreciated by the society.

Gym going youth especially girls are highly influenced by media and Western white skin. In Asia, the difference in color represents the status of higher and lower class. Fair

³² Evion is a Vitamin E capsule

complexion depicts the higher working class, wealth and education and dark complexion depicts lower class jobs with low income (Cash & Smolak, 2012).

My research has found that there is a huge difference between the lifestyle of elite and middle class gym going males and females. But, both classes related the beautification of body with the elite class. It has been also observed that females who belong to middle class are also very beauty conscious because she thinks if they do not have wealth they have beauty that may become the reason to be liked by any rich boy as a gym going female, Bushra of age-37 states

[kiya hova agar dolat nahi ha? Khoobsurati to ha na jesy multivitamin or makeup ka zariya maintain rahti ho; jo kisy be ameer larky ko pasand anay ki waja ban sakti ha.] (What if there is no wealth? There is beauty that I maintain through the use of multivitamins and makeup which can be the reason to makes any rich boy fall in love).

The above statement shows that the boy who belongs to elite class likes the girls who have fair complexion so that they can also meet their status. During the fieldwork, it has been observed that body image and beauty perspective are more related to women. Most gym going girls come to the gym with makeup on because they consider it a part of their personality. They maintain a positive body image and beauty status through the use of makeup.

My research has also found that most of the gym going girls, also visited beauty salon to maintain their skin complexion through whitening facial, manicure and pedicure. These are the cosmetic treatments that not only include the cleaning and beautification of face but also the treatment of hands and feet. It is also observed that most of the gym going girls is recommending each other to try new way of facial that is hydra facial³³ and giving positive feedback on it. They are telling each other that many actresses in the media industry now use hydra facial and now hydra facial is the new and modern way to maintain the complexion and beauty of skin. It is observed that gym going youth is highly influenced

³³ This is a special face treatment that uses a special tool to gently remove dead skin, clean the face, remove impurities, and hydrate the skin

by media to maintain their beauty of skin. During an interview, another gym going male respondent, Khubaib of 19-years says

I have a lot of hair loss. I came to know from media that biotin is good for hair. Then, I decided to use Nutrifactor biotin³⁴ for healthy hair.

Gym going youth prefer to use biotin plus for gaining shinny hair. Biotin is used for hair loss and thinning. It supports hair growth and also good form skin and hair. Biotin is usually taken as a supplement through the overall public to assist with hair loss and to support hair health, although there is no stable medical proof to assist those uses. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have no longer authorized this product for medicinal purposes, apart from use as an additive specific prescription multivitamin (Marks, 2020). In Pakistan, different remedies and hair oil was first used to deal with the hair problems. But, due to the invention of biotin even in beauty salons biotin and keratin treatments is done on the hair to make them shiny, glowing and to treat hair fall (Patel, Swink, & Castelo-Soccio, 2017).

Figure 27: Nutrifactor Biotin Plus



Source: From Google Images

The above figure of “Nutrifactor biotin Plus” shows that however, with the advancement in multivitamins products now biotin also available in tablet or capsule form.

³⁴ Nutrifactor Biotin Plus

Gym going youth is adopting the new ways instead of using hair oil as a traditional method. Multivitamins are used by gym going youth to maintain their hair and skin. They also use multivitamins oil on their face to make their skin better for makeup.

5.5.2 Dressing Patterns

Dressing in the gym culture shows what gym going youth value and what is important to them in their culture and society. It is a symbol that helps people expresses them, show which group they belong to, and figure out how they fit into the physical and social aspects of modern fitness culture. The traditional dress of Pakistan is *Shalwar*³⁵ and *Kameez*³⁶ and Pakistan as an Islamic country does not allow women to wear jeans, T-shirts, tights and half dresses (Jafar, 2005).

It has been observed that most of the married gym going women wear *Shalwar* and *Kameez* and do their regular exercise. It has been also observed that gym going youth carry Nike³⁷ gym bags with them and most gym going boys and girls change their clothes in the changing room when they come to the gym. My research has found that gym going male and female who belongs to elite class have different lifestyle. They can easily buy expensive and branded gym dresses. They wear specific gym dress and also bring their bags and shakers with them while on the other hand as compared to gym going youth who belongs to middle class they do not bring shakers, do not have concern about specific gym dress. Their priority is only to achieve their fitness goals. Moreover, elites are more concerned about their appearance in context of dressing and beauty as compared to youth who belong to middle class because it depicts their status.

My research has revealed that gym going youth are highly influenced by branded and Western culture. They are adopting their dressing styles and want to appear updated and modern. They wear different brands shirts, trousers and shoes due to their status.

³⁵ Shalwar is a loose pajama like trouser that is tight from the ankles.

³⁶ Kameez is the lengthy tunic or shirt.

³⁷ Name of brand

Figure 28: Boy wearing Puma Shirt



Source: Author, 2023

Figure 29: Men Wearing Nike Shoes



Source: Author, 2023

The above figures on the left side show that a man wears Puma³⁸ gym wear and the right figure shows that a man is wearing Nike shoes and Adidas³⁹ trouser. Gym going boys who belongs to elite class do their dressing according to their class to maintain their status among their gym fellow and in society as during focus group discussions with gym going youth, it was found that they feel comfortable wearing gym clothing for exercise. They were also arguing that it is important to wear gym clothes while coming to the gym so that society knows that they go to the gym and have a dress sense appropriate to the environment and maintain their physique and appearance. Moreover, they fulfill the dressing standards of the society. Gym going youth are adopting this modern concept of dressing and are influenced by Western wear, even in Pakistan Western wear shops are also available as it has now become a part of Pakistani culture. Gym going boys who come to gym by wearing T-shirts, shorts, trousers take their dressing for granted. He considers normal to wear specific gym dresses, but if the gym going girl wear the specific gym dress they critique on it. As a 29-year-old male respondent says

If you come to the gym at night, you will see a manifestation of Western culture in female's dressing.

The above statement shows that gym going boys want a woman to wear full clothes as their life partner. My research has found that when a dress fits well it helps gym going youth to feel more comfortable and confident. Furthermore, gym going girls are very conscious about their dressing because for them a good body shape complements their clothes. They self-medicate with various multivitamins and exercise to achieve the perfect body shape so they can wear Western clothes especially jeans to make their body more attractive and in proper shape.

During the fieldwork, it was observed that gym going girls are more concern about their dressing and appearance. They also prefer to wear branded gym wear but they want to wear matching shirt, trouser and shoes to reveal their status.

³⁸ Name of brand

³⁹ Name of brand

Figure 30: Matching Dress Sense Among Gym Going Girls



Source: Author, 2023

The above figure shows that the girl in blue dress wears matching shirt, trouser and shoes to reveal their status and dressing sense. My research has found that girls are fond of wearing matching dress and shoes as compared to boys. They like boys dressing when they have good body like a female gym going respondent name Noor of age-21 says

I like boys when they wear T-shirts. This makes their body muscles more visible and adds to the beauty of the body.

My research has shown that the male body as itself is directly important in society. Males' body image and body shape is revealing in Pakistani society. But, female shape their body to look beautiful inside their clothes.

5.6 Dietary Behaviors and Restrictions

Dietary behaviors and physical activity is also a significant element that plays their role in achieving the beauty standards that are constructed by a society. Maintaining good health requires a combination of a well-balanced diet and consistent physical exercise. Leading an active lifestyle, engaging in physical activities, and consuming healthy foods are crucial

for reducing the threat of obesity and other associated health and body issues. A diet that provides enough calories and essential nutrients is essential for daily functioning for everyone. Diet, regular exercise and the use of multivitamin supplements promote cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles, weight loss, body shaping and enhances overall fitness and appearance. However, for athletes this requirement is almost double that of the general population, depending on the nature and intensity of their activities (Miragaia, Trindade, & Pereira, 2021).

Different cultures have various attitudes towards food, dietary behaviors and restriction. Leading a healthy dietary behavior has utmost importance for gym going youth. They adhere to various meal plans like rich protein diets, low carb⁴⁰ diets or calorie controlled diets depending on their particular fitness aims such as muscles growth, weight reduction, weight gain and whole body transformation. Gym going male respondent Hamza, of age-24 who joins gym for gaining weight says

I have to gain weight. Trainer has told me to eat potatoes, bananas, meat and Surbex Z.

Dietary behavior among gym going youth who want to gain weight involves a well-balanced diet that is abundant in protein, intricate carbohydrates, healthy fats and an assortment of fruits and vegetables. They use smoothies, red meats, chicken, fish, beans, eggs, dairy products, nuts, potatoes, bananas, barley, bread, whole grain pasta and oatmeal. Moreover, specific vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin D and calcium, can boost bone health, which is particularly crucial for gym going youth who engage in weight bearing exercises. Multivitamins supplements can also enhance energy levels, which may be advantageous for individuals who participate in high intensity exercise.

During an informal discussion between trainers and gym going youth, it has been observed that a gym going female participant name Hibba of age-25 discusses the food that

⁴⁰ Carbohydrate

she ate yesterday. She was eaten *chicken karahi*⁴¹ whereupon the trainer started arguing with her that why did you eat this food. The participant replied that my mother said to wash the chicken and eat it. “*You know there is a lot of oil in it,*” said the trainer. How can you lose weight? She says (*shall I die? In our house, we cook in healthy and expensive olive oil. It has no side effects. My father also does not compromise on health; he always prefers to buy good quality oil no matter how expensive it is. I am taking green tea and exercising regularly. What more can I do?*) After saying this she left and started cycling then the trainer says [*ameero ka tareeqay hi niraalay hain*] (*the ways of the rich are unique*).

It has been observed that people in Pakistani society people consume more oil in their food because they consider that the food will only taste good if it has more oil in it. Even, mostly in rural areas of Pakistan people use *desi ghee* (clarified butter) directly on chapatti and then eat it. My research has found that gym going youth who want to lose weight feel more dietary restrictions. They feel more difficulty in maintain their diet. It is also noticeable that gym going youth with similar fitness objectives exchange information and seek guidance that results in the adaptation of dietary patterns and multivitamins use. During an interview, as a male respondent, Shahzaad of age-41 while expressing her views on dietary behavior and restriction states that

As we all know our body needs all vitamins and minerals but it is extremely difficult to consume them all from our daily diet. By taking multivitamin supplements and green tea, I can easily avoid sugary fruits and lose my weight.

My research has found that most of the gym going youth uses multivitamins to avoid sugary fruits. Gym going youth who are dieting specially to lose weight do not prefer to eat sugary fruits due to dietary patterns and restriction because it gives more calories to them that can make them obese. Gym going youth is also taking multivitamins to meet their nutrition and mineral needs. Gym going youth identify multivitamins as the substitute

⁴¹ It is also known as Kadai chicken. It is a South Asia chicken dish popular in Pakistani and North Indian Cuisine for its spicy flavor.

to fruits and vegetables to meet the entire body's vitamin needs. During an interview with Ainy, a gym going married female respondent of age-29 says

Taking a tablet is easier than taking balanced diet. If you do not eat fruits and vegetable, then one tablet is enough to fulfill the body's vitamin requirement.

My research has revealed that gym going youth consider a single vitamin tablet to be the equivalent of all vitamins and minerals that anyone can consume easily. It can be due to various reasons like personal dietary choices, time constraints, convince and cultural beliefs that multivitamins can fulfill nutrition needs.

5.6.1 Cheat Day

Cheat day can be viewed as how gym going youth manage their taste and eating behaviors. Anthropologically, the concept of a cheat day can be regarded as a cultural phenomenon that promotes balance, control, and the pleasure of nourishment as a social and sensory experience. Gym going youth allow themselves to deviate from their usual eating habit and eat food that consider less healthy according to their dietary patterns. During an interview a gym going male respondent, Arsalan of age-34 says

When I go out with friends, I compromised on my strict diet.

My research has found that friends and families are also the reasons for the cheat day for gym going youth as during an interview, with 31-years old, a gym going female respondent Saba, stated that

I am very foodie. I love to eat fast food but I also want to lose weight as I am getting married after three months. I have short time to lose my weight before my marriage. Mostly, on weekends when I go out with my family it is just a cheat day, it is hard to control on food. But, I do exercise and take

*Nutrifactor Green Tea*⁴² capsule daily for healthy and fast weight lose. It is beneficial and give good results.

Moreover, it was observed during the fieldwork that one day in the evening, some gym going youth were eating *samosas*⁴³ and *pakor*⁴⁴ (fritter). They are more interested in eating fast food than fruits and vegetables. The perception they had was that they would exercise more if they did not eat a healthy diet and to balance out their cheat day; they use green tea multivitamins tablet. It also helps them to maintain their diet and body. My research has found that cheat days and the self-medication of multivitamins are shaped by social, cultural and individual factor.

Figure 31: Nutrifactor Green Tea Complex Supplement



Source: From Google Images

The above figure shows that; it is worth noting that green tea is not only available in tea bags but is now also available in capsule form. Based on the study conducted on the usage of green tea among professionals and non-professionals in Pakistan, it has been found that green tea is commonly consumed across all age brackets. A significant

⁴² Nutrifactor Green Tea Complex is a food supplement that provides strong antioxidant protection, healthy immunity system and weight loss.

⁴³ Samosa is Indian Subcontinent food that expands worldwide. It is a triangular shaped pastry that filled with different ingredients like vegetables, meat and fried in oil.

⁴⁴ It is also known as Pakoda. It is famous Indian Subcontinent deep fried snack that is cook by coating in a mixture of chickpea flour (Besan) and different ingredient that contain onions, potatoes, cauliflower, spinach etc.

proportion of individuals approximately 67% consume green tea on a daily basis. Furthermore, the consumption of green tea is more prominent among professionals in comparison to non-professionals. The primary reasons for consuming green tea are to refresh and aid in weight management (Hameed, Naveed, & Zehra, 2014).

5.7 Conclusion

In the conclusion, research has found that gym going youth used various multivitamins supplements to meet the societal beauty standards that are reinforced by the depiction in media. Moreover, the society also play a vital role in constructing the beauty standards in the society and also forced gym going youth to join gym and maintain their body images. They have set beauty and positive body image standards not only for girls but also for boys. Gym going youth use various multivitamins supplements as a shortcut to gain their desire body results. They not only use it for gaining positive body image but also for body adornment purpose. Gym going youth is also using various multivitamins supplements along with modern ways of treatment to look beautiful when they apply makeup on their face and to maintain their bodies and skin healthy. Based on the particular fitness aim such as weight gain, weight loss, muscles building, six-pack abs building gym going youth not only use multivitamins supplement they also maintain their figure through diet and exercise.

6 BETTER LIFESTYLE AND THE USE OF MULTIVITAMINS

6.1 Introduction

The core concern of this chapter is to discuss the gym going youth lifestyle and the use of multivitamins. First, it discusses the factors due to which gym going youth use multivitamins to make their life better in their everyday routine. Then, gym going youth lifestyle also seeks to explore a psychological dimension and its relationship to self-medication of multivitamins that goes beyond the physical aspect. It also explores the range of self-medication practices and behaviors that revolve around society and culture and how that prevailing knowledge system impact on the lifestyle of the gym going youth. Lastly, it talks about the role of gym trainers in maintain the lifestyle of gym going youth.

6.2 Health Consciousness and Use of Multivitamins

The health of a person is a result of their lifestyle. Lifestyle indicators consist of behaviors that impact health and body such as the frequency of physical exercise and daily activities (Dik, 2021). The Pakistani community is experiencing a significant shift as many people are now making their body appearance and fitness top priority due to awareness and education (Mufti, 2011). This phenomenon further exemplifies the societal principles attributed to bodily wellness and striving for the best possible state of health and body.

The way of living life influence gym going youth choices and overall health and body status. Gym going youth with a concern for maintaining healthy lifestyle use various multivitamins and supplements that can aid in their recreation of good health and body. My research shows that gym going youth are becoming more health conscious and are increasingly aware about the healthy lifestyle. The concept of health consciousness among gym going youth shows their concerns with physical fitness and its relation with multivitamins to maintain their lifestyle. During the FGDs, a married 36-years old female gym going respondent; Hafsa says

I come to gym for fitness and use CaC-1000 Plus ⁴⁵daily for better health and lifestyle.

The above statement shows that gym going youth is also using “CaC-1000 Plus” for their health. It not only gives them better health but also gives them healthy lifestyle. In Pakistani society, it has been observed that doctors advised patients to engage in physical activities on regular basis for the fitness of their body and to maintain health (Mufti, 2011). Another, 33-years old, married gym going male respondent name; Usama says that

I am very conscious about my health that is why I come to gym for good body and health.

During the informal discussion with the gym trainer it is also found that most of the gym going married youth comes to the gym for their body fitness as they are very conscious about their health. They also use various multivitamins supplements to maintain their health and body. My research has found that most of the married male and females of gym are very health conscious about their health and lifestyle. They not only use multivitamins supplements for good body image but also to maintain their body physique but also their health.

6.2.1.1 Case Study of a Gym Going Respondent Who is Conscious About his Health and Chubby Belly

Zain, a 28-years old gym going respondent shared his case. He mentioned that his wife noticed that he is gaining weight and has started pointing out him, Zain you are gaining weight and your age is only 28-years. He said that especially, after two months of my marriage, he realizes his wife do not like his chubby belly. His wife suggested him to start morning walk. He took her advice seriously and began morning walk. He mentioned that he has done morning walk for just two weeks but, he did not see much progress as it was hard for him to wake up early since he tended to stay up late at night. He recognized the need for a more flexible fitness solution, then his wife suggested joining one of those gym that had late-night hours. He shared that the late-night hours perfectly accommodated his

⁴⁵ Name of multivitamin

schedule, providing him a convenient and effective way to achieve his physical goals that he desired. He mentioned that initially, exercising was challenging for him and his performance was quite poor. He feels exhausted just after three minutes on the treadmill. He wants to get positive changes in his body and he sought advice from his trainer who recommended GNC Mega Men Whole Body for better health and improved performance. He mentioned that now, it's been eleven months, and his wife is thrilled with the results. He also shared that not only his wife but my friends and family admire his body. He stated that he started at 69 kg and he is now at a healthier weight of 61 kg with age 29 and with no belly fat. He is extremely satisfied with the use of multivitamin supplements, particularly GNC Mega Men Whole Body. He shared that more importantly, incorporating the gym into his daily routine has not only made his body more admirable but has also instilled a habit of regular workouts, ensuring good health throughout his life.

6.2.2 Healthy Ageing

Healthy ageing is also the factor that plays a great role in gaining better lifestyle, health and positive body image. The consumption of multivitamins among gym going youth in their daily routine makes their lifestyle better and increase their lifespan. During an interview, a gym going female respondent of 34-years old, Meerab states that

Multivitamins are part of my daily routine now. My body will not look old before time.

Gym going youth is using multivitamins supplements and makes it the part of their daily life to develop and maintain their functional capacity that give them strength in older age. It not only gives them better lifestyle but also healthy ageing. My research has revealed that the aforementioned assertion embodies the objective of gym going youth to maintain health and youthful look. They postpone the consequences of ageing by using various multivitamins supplements. It also reflects the cultural expectation that gym going youth maintain their lifestyle and good physique for as long as possible. Similarly, a male gym going respondent Umair of 22-years old says

I do not want to look old after my fifties. Multivitamins will keep me young.

My research has found that gym going youth wants to maintain their youthful look for a longer time. They also believe that after fifty years of age a person starts getting old and they use multivitamins as an easiest way to maintain their youthful appearance. They do not want to become older even after their fifties. They want to maintain their body, health and lifestyle that they gain through the use of multivitamins supplements. Self-medication of various multivitamins supplements is good and easy way to use as a strategy for health related consumption (Hussain & Khanum, 2008). Healthy ageing enables gym going youth to take charge on their own health and build confidence in their ability to manage their health, body and lifestyle.

6.3 Mental Health and Use of Multivitamins

Multivitamins enhance immunity system, stamina, energy, support teeth and bones, assist calcium consumption, keep skin healthy, maintain body metabolize proteins and carbohydrates, fulfill body demands and support brain and nervous system to sustain healthy blood in a body. Gym going youth focus not only on physical health and appearance but also on mental health by the use of various multivitamins supplements.

My research has shown that most gym going youth go to the gym not only to maintain their health and fitness. In fact, they also joined the gym as their hobby and most importantly they used the gym as a place for stress management. Gym going youth join gym and take various multivitamins supplements not to maintain their physical health but also their mental health because gym going youth thinks that mental health is more important than physical health. Eating, drinking, getting up, sitting and sleeping also have great role on the bodily appearance and health. During the interview, Razia; gym going married female respondent of age 40-years says

[Jan ha to jahan ha. Zehani Sukoon or body appearance achi zindagi ka liya meri phli priority ha. Gym ka mahool mji zehani sukoon deta ha, yaha anay sa ma ghar ki tensions sa bach jati ho] (If there is life, then there is the world. Mental health and body appearance is my priority for better lifestyle. The

environment of gym gives me mental peace, coming here keeps me away from the tensions at home).

My research has found that most gym going youth feel relaxed when they come to the gym because it helps them to improve their mood. Their mind diverts from their home tension and makes their mind and body feel good. Their mind feels fresh and healthy in the gym environment when they focus on their body and exercise. Use of various multivitamins supplements gives them better lifestyle and helps them to cope up with their daily activities. During an interview, Abuzar; another gym going male respondent of age-35 says that

I feel a change in my body after coming to gym. I feel relaxed because I talk to my gym mates. I exercise here. Gym gives health as well as relaxation. Along with all these things I also use Surbex Z for my body, mind and overall health.

It has been found that gym going youth also use multivitamins to boost their mental health. The gym environment also helps gym going youth to distract themselves from negative thoughts that help them to cope up their depression, anxiety and stress. My research has also found that most of the gym going youth does not use “Surbex Z” for gaining positive body image but they also use it for mental health and better lifestyle. According to most of the gym going youth brief session of aerobic exercise for five to ten minutes enhance their emotional state and alleviate their worries. Aerobic workouts either a single session or a long-term program give up advantageous outcomes for mental state. Sustained participation in exercise for duration of ten to fifteen weeks can additionally enhance psychological health (Star, 2023).

6.3.1 Work-life Balance

The relationship of work and multivitamins can be seen as work related to psychological health and better lifestyle. High demands jobs, extended working hours and physical tasks can increase stress level. Persistent work stress can impact a person’s overall health and affect their nutritional status that can impact individual choices to self-medicate to boost

their health, well-being and job performance. During an interview, with Zahida, a female respondent of age-39 says

Home, job, workload, and exercise all in one day. Such is my lifestyle; busy and tiring. There is tension in the mind. Now it's done. It's still remaining. If mental health is set and good than I perform all my tasks well. That is why I use the Nutrifactor Magnesium for normal nervous system function.

Multivitamins can help bridge the nutritional gaps that may arise in the dietary behaviors. In today's busy society, individuals may lack the time to get healthy meals, causing them to rely on multivitamins as a convenient remedy to fulfill their daily nutritional requirements. Gym going youth have to fulfill the better nutritional requirements due to their regular exercise regimen. They use various multivitamin supplements to ensure that they receive the necessary nutrients to support their overall health and lifestyle. In addition to healthy dietary behaviors, multivitamins are a vital component in supporting the mental health and body objectives of gym going youth. Similarly, another gym going female respondent, Amna, of 26-years old who is a housewife states

Multivitamin cap⁴⁶ are very easy to take and keep my body and mind active no matter how busy my schedule is.

It has been found that most of the housewives used multivitamins to compensate their daily tasks so that they can manage their mental health and body. They have to look after their children and other household tasks that not only impact on their bodies but also on their minds and ways of life. So, for better lifestyle and good body and mind health they use multivitamins. Another, gym going male respondent, Usman of age-27 who does nine to five jobs says that

Due to my nine to five jobs it is difficult for me to eat three meals a day so I use GNC Mega Men⁴⁷ for positive body image and better performance. It is easy to take and that is why I like to use it.

⁴⁶ Capsule

⁴⁷ GNC mega men whole body is a multivitamin.

In Pakistan, gym going youth is placing an increasing focus on attaining a perfect physical appearance that is frequently linked to wellness, desirability and achievement. They have no time to maintain their body but at the same time body in the office premises affect their performance and acceptability due to these paradoxes gym going youth used multivitamins. My research has found that gym going youth rely on multivitamins to compensate potential dietary inadequacies. It is influenced by societal lifestyle and expectations that multivitamins can increase energy level, immunity function and mental health. They view multivitamins as a suitable solution for guarantee a necessary intake of multivitamins and minerals when dietary choices may be limited.

6.4 Manipulation of Prevailing Knowledge System and Lifestyle

Anthropologically, the prevailing knowledge encircling multivitamins is understood by analyzing cultural and societal values, health and fitness tendencies that form beliefs and practices regarding the utilization of multivitamins. Gym going youth perceptions of the demand for multivitamins are influenced by cultural beliefs and prevailing knowledge system that impact their lifestyle. The prevalence of healthy lifestyle knowledge accessible via the internet, social media and society has encouraged fitness enthusiasts to use multivitamins. The convenience of obtaining knowledge without the requirement of medical proficiency contributes to the belief that consulting a physician is unnecessary.

My research found that gym enthusiasts considered that they have accurately identified their own multivitamins according to their bodily demands and lifestyle, without the need for expert assessment. One of the male respondents Usman, of age-27 says

Multivitamins has no side effects. There is no need to consult doctor for using multivitamins. It makes my life better.

The above statement means that gym going youth consider multivitamins as there are no harmful effects because multivitamins are easily available on the counter without a doctor recommendation. In Pakistani culture, it is a common practice that people frequently utilize various medicines to cure illness and diseases without consulting a doctor. Such medicines include painkillers, antibiotics, and multivitamins. The practice of self-medication is embedded in the societal values and personal experiences (Aqeel et al.,

2014). Similarly, another 23-years old female respondent, Warda who was very happy with the use of multivitamin says

Multivitamins gives positive results.

Gym going youth who have personally experienced using multivitamins without any apparent side effects reinforce the belief that multivitamins are generally harmless and produce positive results. The positive feedback from much other gym going youth molds their fellows' perceptions that grasp youth interests. The interpretation of multivitamins as everyday essential promote overall health reinforces the notion that they are harmless and give positive results. My research finds that multivitamins are considered as positive supplements rather than medicine. They are easily available on the medical stores and that is why multivitamins do not require a prescription and lead to the assumption that they are safe and give positive results. On contrary, it has been found that a female respondent, Bushra of age-37 who was not in favor to use multivitamins for fitness and better lifestyle augmented that

I am not in favor to gain fitness and better lifestyle with the use of multivitamins, but, I think it is pumping the body to get shape with steroids and multivitamins.

She adds that steroids have many effects on the body. I do not see people using steroids here at the gym but people do. I have seen here that most gym youth use multivitamins. The above statement reveals that the self-medication of multivitamins still exists among gym going youth for body building and shaping in the context of fitness and better lifestyle. My research has also found that some gym going youth are not in favor to use various multivitamins supplements for better lifestyle and positive body image because they consider it medically wrong to pump the body. Using multivitamins can also lead to possible side effects because many people may have insufficient knowledge or understanding of taking multivitamins. This may be attributed to inadequate health education, limited access to accurate information or reliance on unverified sources.

6.4.1.1 Case Study of a Gym Going Respondent Who Want to Gain Muscular Body

Hamza, a 21-years old gym going respondent stated his case that in his friend circle, he was the one without a muscular physique, and he was very impressed by the muscular body of his friends. Then, he decided to join the gym on the advice of his friends, he also began using Muscletech Multivitamins⁴⁸ to boost his immunity and achieve muscle gains instantly, as his friends claimed to have been using it for a year and gained their desired body results. He mentioned that, after just three days, he experienced an upset stomach and severe diarrhea, accompanied by bleeding. He mentioned that his family rushed him to the hospital as they are very concerned about his health. The doctor inquired about his diet, and he mentioned the Muscletech multivitamin supplements and his recent gym routine. He mentioned that to investigate further, the doctor conducted various medical tests, including an ultrasound due to the pain in his left kidney. He shared that the results revealed not only diarrhea but also a severe kidney infection. He found himself hospitalized for fifteen days. His doctor strictly advised him not to self-medicate with any multivitamin supplement as his age is only 21-years old and his kidney are effecting in the younger age. He mentioned the doctor advised against any further use of multivitamin supplements and recommended to drink plenty of water and incorporating fruits into his diet. Since that incident, he no longer used any multivitamin supplements, realizing their adverse effects on his health. He shared that he has abandoned the pursuit of an overly muscular body, shifting his focus to maintaining overall fitness and health. It has been five months, and he have embraced a daily workout routine as a fundamental part of his life. He mentioned that he has learned the importance of prioritizing his health over muscular body goals and now believe the casual use of multivitamin supplements is dangerous without professional guidance.

6.4.2 Social Norms

Manipulation of prevailing knowledge system for better lifestyle also effects by the motivation of social and cultural norms. According to my research, a great number of gym going youth utilize multivitamins as a means of fostering a feeling of togetherness and exchanging expertise. Social norms play an important role in self-medication of

⁴⁸ Muscletech Platinum Multivitamin

multivitamins culture. These are unwritten rules that exist in a society and cultural group that influence on individual's attitudes and beliefs to maintain their lifestyle. My research has found that social norms contribute to the normalization of multivitamins as self-medication. The sharing of personal experience among most gym going youth supports the idea that self-medication with multivitamins is a socially acceptable and common practice for better lifestyle and positive body image. Ainy, 29-years old, married female respondent advised on the use of multivitamins and says that

I use Cod Liver Oil⁴⁹ daily because it has vitamins A and D and all the multivitamins, but during periods I also use Gentle Iron⁵⁰ because it do not let my body feel tired and weak. It gives me active lifestyle. Well! I recommend every married and unmarried girl to use any iron tablet as it gives more benefits after your married life.

Gym girls do not feel ashamed to tell their male trainers about their periods because it would be dangerous for their bodies if they hide it. During informal discussion with the trainers, it has been also found that the trainers only advise girls to take rest for two days of periods and they are not recommending them to use any multivitamins supplements in those days. But, if they still want to attend the gym, they can come. During the fieldwork, it has been also find that girls, who come to gym during menstruation, do not do any exercises, especially on the first two days. On the third and fourth day, the trainers resume their training. But, they do not allow them to lift weights because it affects their body figure. They only advise them to do lower body exercises. It has been observed that girls only do cycling for weight loss when they are menstruating. My research has found that gym going girls are using various multivitamins supplements by their own will and also recommending its use to others. My research also reveals that married females are using multivitamins after their marriages due to their age factor but they are recommending the use of multivitamins to young gym going girls. This is also the one of the reasons to promote self-medication culture among gym going youth for active lifestyle. The concept

⁴⁹ It is the capsules of Holland & Barrett Company.

⁵⁰ Name of multivitamin

of using multivitamins among housewives is different because of their daily activities and married life. They share their perspectives about using multivitamins from their lived experiences for active lifestyle. Correspondingly, gym going boys are also recommending various multivitamins for good body image and active lifestyle to most of their gym fellows.

6.4.2.1 Case Study of a Gym Going Respondent Who Recommending Multivitamins Supplements to Girls

Misbah, a 33-years old stated her case that running a beauty salon while performing the responsibilities of being a mom to two lovely kids is not an easy task for her. She has given birth to her second child recently. She shared her experience was more challenging in the second pregnancy due to a calcium deficiency. She mentioned that the pain she endured during childbirth pushed her to take charge of her body shape and health. She shared that being in the beauty industry, appearance matters, and she found herself struggling with post-pregnancy weight gain. She wants to maintain her body shape and turned to the gym as her goals is to reduce excess fat and maintain a good body shape. She mentioned that the aftermath of her workout sessions often left her feeling low on energy and she feel pain in her knees. Recognizing the importance of addressing her calcium deficiency, she heard about the positive impact of CaC-1000 plus⁵¹ from her friends and gym members. Then, she decided to use it daily. She mentioned that this multivitamin supplement not only helps in boosting her energy levels but also contributes to strengthening her bones. She shared that with a household to manage, children to care for, and a salon to run, maintaining a good body shape and health is not just a personal goal; it is a necessity and incorporating CaC-1000 Plus into her routine has also given positive results on her body. She expressed that the increased energy levels have not only made her more efficient in managing her daily tasks but has also aided in achieving a healthy weight loss and good body shape. She mentioned that she has loss 9 kg in eleven months. Her weight was almost 67 kg when she joined gym but now it is 58 kg. She shared her salon customers appreciate her body shape and her body looks more presentable in front of them now. She is very happy with the use of Cac-1000 Plus because it supports her bones and give her energy to achieve her desired

⁵¹ CaC-1000 Plus is a water soluble calcium supplement available in orange, mango, cola and lemon flavors.

results. She mentioned that it is a simple yet effective step towards a better lifestyle and prioritizing good body shape and health is not just about looking good but also about feeling good. She shared that reflecting on her journey, she find it essential to share her case and recommend multivitamin supplements to every woman, even before their marriage so that they cannot face the consequences that she faced in her pregnancy.

6.4.3 Peer Influences

Gym going youth is highly influenced by their interactions with peers and social groups. Discussions and interactions with gym members, friends and colleagues shape gym going youth's lifestyle and efficiency of multivitamins to achieve their desirable body results and active way of life. My research has shown that gym going youth are more likely to take multivitamins if their social groups and friends are engage in this practice. Gym going youth feel obligated to take multivitamins to fit in with their peers and maintain a sense of belonging to the group without the verification of the information. As, during an interview, a 34-years old male respondent, Zia explains that

One of my gym fellow she told me to use SunnyD ⁵²for healthy bones and immunity. We both use it once in a week because exercise is not an easy task for good body, weight loss and better lifestyle.

Figure 32: Sunny D Injection



Source: From Google Images

⁵² Sunny D is an injection used for the treatment of vitamin D deficiency.

The above figure shows that “Sunny D” is not only uses to gain vitamin D but is also use to boost immunity. He further explains that he uses “SunnyD” injection mixed with warm milk. It has been found that “Sunny D” is basically used for the deficiency of vitamin D. It has been also found that most of the gym going youth was using vitamin D injection by adding it in milk after the interval of fifteen days. But, gym going youths is also using “Sunny D” for good body, weight loss and active lifestyle on the recommendation of their gym fellows. Most of the gym going youths is using various multivitamins for immunity development so that they cannot become sick when they perform their daily exercise for active lifestyle and positive body image. Similarly, a gym going female respondent, Saba of age-31 says that

Gym trainer recommends my gym friend to use Nutrifactor Green Tea capsule for weight loss and I also want to lose weight. I start using it by my own because I also want to lose weight. Alhamdulillah⁵³! I weighed sixty-seven when I joined the gym, now I am fifty-three in nine months.

She further added that it was a very difficult for her friends to lose weight. Her weight is seventy-five that is why gym trainer recommends her to use “Nutrifactor Green Tea capsule”. My research has found that gym going youth also use various multivitamins supplements because their gym fellows are using it. They are even not recommended to use multivitamins supplements by the trainers but they still use it. They think the use of multivitamins supplements is the easiest and fast way to gain their desired body results and active lifestyle.

6.4.3.1 Case Study of a Gym Going Respondent who Used Multivitamins Supplements on the Use of Friends

Saleem Raza, a 22-years old gym going respondent explain his case that he used to have fever daily of such intensity that it hindered his ability to attend university and maintain his gym routine. He was very upset about health. His family was very much concerned about his health and take his to the hospital. He discussed his symptoms with the doctor.

⁵³ Alhamdulillah is an expression in the Arabic language (أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ) which signifies “praise to be Allah”, and sometimes translated as “gratefulness to Allah”.

He mentioned that upon examination by the doctor she suggested him some blood tests, urine test and ultra sound. He received his blood reports in the evening. After undergoing an ultrasound, the results revealed the presence of kidney stones and severe infection due to which he was having 101 or 102 fever every day. Doctor asked him about his age, diet and routine. Then, he shared with the doctor that he is 22-years old and he had been taking calcium and iron multivitamin supplements for an extended period on the recommendation of his gym going peers. He wants to stay active and energetic and to keep his bones strong so his body looks strong and muscular that is why he joined gym and do exercise daily. He does not know before that he was having kidney stones. His doctor got so much surprised and worried. She explained that the combination of calcium and iron supplements over an extended period had adversely affected his kidneys. She emphasized that it is not advisable to consume both calcium and iron simultaneously, especially when dealing with kidney stones. She also recommended avoiding spinach and vitamin C especially in the form of supplements and suggested me to drink 8 to 12 glass of water every day. He was hospitalized for a month and he learned that the simultaneous intake of calcium and iron supplements can contribute to kidney stone formation. Understanding this, his doctor advised against continuing this supplement regimen. Consequently, He made the decision to discontinue the use of multivitamin supplements and not to self-medicate with the multivitamins supplements even on the advice of her friends. He mentioned that this experience has been an eye-opener, teaching him the importance of paying attention to the interactions between supplements and their potential impact on health. He decided not to recommend anybody any multivitamin. He also decided not to follow any recommendation of multivitamins supplements without the suggestion of doctors or medical tests. Now, He is more conscious of his dietary choices and their implications for his kidney health. He just only want to make her body fit now.

6.5 Self-Medication and Role of Gym Trainers

Self-medication with various medicines is a common practice worldwide. The availability of medication is a significant contributor to the high frequency of self-medication practices (Khan et al., 2014). The impact of pharmacists, drugstore employees, as well as relatives

and acquaintances, convenient availability were the decisive elements for self-medication. According to (Naidu, Krishna, & Rao, 2015), the availability of over the counter medicine (OTC) is also the factor for self-medication. Almost half of all medicines sold in Pakistan are provided with no prescription. In Pakistan, Analgesics, antibiotics, anti-diarrheal, antihistamines, antipyretics, cough medicines, tonics and multivitamins are all readily available without a prescription from society pharmacies. As the sales of non-prescription drugs continue to rise, the rate of self-medication is steadily increasing in Pakistan (Mansoor, 2013).

Gym going youth self-medicate with various multivitamins supplements and take charge on their own health and build confidence in their ability to manage their health, body and active lifestyle. Most of the gym going youth used multivitamins by their own and also on the recommendation of gym trainers. My research has revealed that gym going youth are self-medicating with different multivitamins supplements for social and cultural reasons that are discussed above. The gym trainers also have significant role in promoting medication of multivitamins in order to gain positive results by their clients. It has been observed that trainers and owner of the gym was also using multivitamins for their body enhancement and also to show their clients that it gives positive results and better lifestyle. They recommend them to use various multivitamins supplements so that they can get appreciation from the gym going youth. As, a male gym going respondent of age-24 says during an interview that

I am using Opti-Men⁵⁴ for muscle building and active life Hmmm... I do not remember exactly its uses. But, it is written on the bottle and with the help of printed label on the bottle anyone can use any multivitamins supplements easily as it has become a trend now.

The use of multivitamins supplements is based on the cultural understanding that it gives various benefits and anyone can use it with the help of printed label on the bottle. In Pakistan, it is a common practice to use multivitamins by reading the label printed on bottles (Anjum, 2017). Moreover, during the field work it has been also observed that most

⁵⁴ ON (Optimum Nutrition) Opti-Men is multivitamin.

of the gym going youth understood the printed labels on the various form of multivitamins supplements and used them.

Figure 33: ON (Optimum Nutrition) Opti-Men Dietary Supplement



Source: From Google Images

The above image shows that “Opti Men” is the dietary supplement that is not only used for active lifestyle but it is also used for muscles, immunity, metabolism and energy support. It has been also observed that in gym there is a great emphasis on maintaining healthy lifestyle, fitness and positive body image by the use of various multivitamins supplements. My research has shown that gym going youth prevalence has considerably aided in the broad acceptance of multivitamins as a means of fashion and trend that boost physical capability and promoting active lifestyle. Similarly, during FGDs another gym going male respondent; Haris of age-34 says that

Gym trainer recommends me to use Surbex Z daily and Indrop D3 Injection⁵⁵ after fifteen days.

⁵⁵ Indrop D. It is a vitamin D3 injection.

My research has found that the recommendation of Surbex Z from the trainers highlight the influence of trusted source by the gym going youth. Trainers as a trusted source play a significant role in developing youth choices regarding health, fitness and positive body image. Use of multivitamins is the cultural expectations that are perceived as safe and effective. The above statement revealed that gym going youth also face some constraints that limit their exposure to sunlight like long working hours, places with limited sunlight and some cultural beliefs restricts outdoor activities like sunlight effect on skin that develop a need for alternative methods to consume vitamin D. It has been also found that most gym going youth at the gym use multivitamins from their observation to meet cultural beauty standards. As, during FGDs a gym going female respondent Laraib of age-36 states that

[jab mery ghutno sa karich karich ki awaz aati ha ma Calcium CaC⁵⁶ lena shuro kar deti hon Is ka koi side effect nai hoty yeh meri hadiyon or body par acha result deti ha or mujy fit rakhny me madad krti hain] (When my knees start to crackle I start taking Calcium CaC. It has no side effects; it gives good results on my bones and helps me to remain fit with good body).

My research has found that gym going youth is using calcium multivitamin to maintain their bones. My research highlights the individual choices and cultural beliefs of gym going youth to maintain a good health and positive body image allows them to easily incorporate different multivitamins and supplements into their routine.

6.6 Conclusion

In the light of the above discussion, cultural perceptions that multivitamins give good health and healthy aging influences gym going youth choices. Gym going youth use various multivitamins supplements because they do not want to look old before their age even in their old age. They want to maintain their positive body image as it is like and appreciated by the society and this concept influences gym going youth to self-medicate with various multivitamin supplements. Use of gym and multivitamins by gym going youth

⁵⁶ CaC-1000 PLUS

shows that most of the gym going youth get their desired results from workout and by the use of various multivitamins supplements. Some gym going youth use multivitamins for maintaining their active lifestyle and to supplement their nutrients lost during exercise, some prefer to gain energy and to manage their daily activities. Gym going youth is not only using multivitamins supplements for maintaining their physique, appearance but they are also using it to maintain their mental health.

Moreover, prevailing knowledge system also affects the lifestyle of gym going youth as most of the gym going youth use multivitamins supplements due to their peer influences and on the recommendation of their friends. They also face serious health issues. The efficacy of multivitamins has physical effects on gym going youth attitudes and experience.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This ethnographic research was aimed to explore the self-medication of multivitamins among gym going youth. The research question assumed that socio-culture factors play a vital role in shaping the beliefs and experiences of gym going youth for self-medication of multivitamins supplements. Therefore, the first research objective of the study was to examine the perception of gym going youth about multivitamins. The second objective of the research was to understand the nature and extent of multivitamins among gym going youth. Since, the perception of gym going youth are shaped by the cultural factors so the third objective of the study was to look into the role of self-medication culture in the over use of multivitamins among gym going youth. The last objective was to explore the relationship between lifestyle and multivitamins intake of gym going youth.

The second chapter is the review of literature that covers the literature related to the topic of the research by making several themes and subthemes including gym culture, body image in cultural context, popular culture, role of multivitamins in gym culture, body aesthetic, diet and exercise. At the end, this chapter describes the research gap that is found in literature review and how my research has covered this gap. The existing literature does not talk about the use of multivitamins by gym going youth as a shortcut for achieving their desire body goals that are constructed in a Pakistani society.

The third chapter of the thesis describes the research setting and methodology that was applied during the fieldwork. It is an ethnographic research and was conducted at Momentum Fitness Gym and Supplement Store that is located on 2nd Floor, 287 H-2, Abdul Haq Road, opposite Emporium Mall Gate#4, Block H-2, Phase-II, Johar Town, Lahore. Researcher spent time at Momentum Fitness Gym and Supplement Store for four months i.e. from November 12, 2022 to February 27, 2023. A sample of 25 was ascertained through purposive sampling technique keeping in mind the variable. Two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were also conducted for the purpose of data collection. Participant as observer and informal discussions with trainers and in-depth interviewers were also important means of data collection. Field notes and recorded audios also play a significant role in documenting information collected from the field work.

Fourth chapter discuss about the use of multivitamins and popular culture. It explores the understanding of multivitamins among gym going youth that they consider multivitamins supplements as a natural supplement. Then, it discusses the nature and extent of the multivitamins that which type of multivitamins are used by gym going youth. They use various multivitamins supplements in the form of tablets, capsules, injections, powder and water soluble to gain their desired body goals. Gym going youth is self-medicating with more than one multivitamins supplement in their daily routine because they consider it safe and easy to use. It also discusses the selection of branded and local multivitamins supplements by gym going youth. Gym going youth uses both types of multivitamins depending upon their status. Popular culture including advertisement and consumer culture also plays a significant role in constructing the perceptions of gym going youth about the use of multivitamins supplements and positive body image. Gendering of products is also the factor that shapes the perspective of gym going youth to use various multivitamins according to their gender to achieve their culturally constructed standards of body images and beauty.

Fifth chapter is about the gym culture of body shaping and the use of multivitamins. It discusses the role of self-medication culture in the over use of multivitamins. First, it talks about the cultural concept of beauty that plays their role in the use of multivitamins by gym going youth to achieve the standards of beauty that are set by boys for girls and vice versa. Then, it talks about the societal appreciation that gym going youth body is not only appreciated in the gym culture but also in Pakistani society by the people. Pakistani society is not only the cause of appreciation for gym going youth but they also feel societal pressure due to their fat body images and take it as their motivation to join gym. Gym going youth have their body ideals to whom they are inspired with and wants their body appearance like them. In the gym culture, gym going youth also have their body competition to make their bodies look better from each other. The multivitamins are also used by gym going youth to enhance their body adornment through tattoo making and the use of multivitamins supplements. In Pakistan, not only positive body image but also healthy skin, hair, use of cosmetics and dressing patterns creates a need among gym going youth to maintain their body aesthetic. Gym going youth also follow different dietary food patterns like rich protein diets, low carbohydrate diets or calorie controlled diets based on

their particular fitness and body aims such as muscles growth, whole body transformation, weight lose and weight gain. Research has shown that most gym going youth use multivitamins supplements instead of sugary fruits, and secondly that taking a multivitamins pill in a day is a much easier and convenient way to achieve their desire body goals.

Sixth chapter is about the better lifestyle and the use of multivitamins by gym going youth. Gym going youth is not only using multivitamins supplements for achieving their desire body goals but they are also very health conscious and wants to make their lifestyle better. The goals of gym going youth are to maintain a youthful look and delay the consequences of ageing by using multivitamins as a shortcut and easy way that reflects the cultural expectations to strengthen the physical skills for a longer time. Gym going youth is using various multivitamins supplements for their better mental health and the gym culture helps gym going youth to cope up with stress and tensions they face at their homes. Multivitamins supplements are also used by gym going youth to manage their daily activities, mental health, body image and lifestyle. Self-medication with various multivitamins supplements among gym going youth is also due to the manipulation of prevailing knowledge system that are influenced by social norms and peer influences. Excessive use of multivitamin supplements also harms the health of most gym going youth and impacts their lifestyle. Lastly, this chapter also explains the self-medication and the role of gym trainers. Gym going youth is using various multivitamins supplements by their own wills and also on the recommendation of their trainers.

It has been concluded that the bodies of male and female are associated with the standards of beauty that are constructed by the popular culture in the Pakistani society. The positive body image of males is perceived in a way that the Pakistani society demands a presentable male body. Gym going youth is building their bodies to meet the standards set by society that are constructed through media. They want a male body to be healthy with handsome personality. They do not want the short heighted and chubby belly boys. In fact, they want heighted, attractive and handsome personality's boys with bulky and lean muscles but not with bulky body. They also like boys with six-pack abs.

Gym going boys also face challenges in sustaining their demanding jobs and sedentary jobs. Self-medication of multivitamins presents a possible way to supplement their diet and help to maintain their body image even in office premises. It is a mindset of Pakistani people that a good personality person with good body image is active, strong while the fat ones are judged as lazy and inactive. In order to achieve these beauty standards of positive body image set that is set by society gym going youth is using various multivitamins supplements as a shortcut. Gym going boys are achieving these body images as they want to appear presentable, attractive and healthy.

The body images of gym going girls are more in demanding than boys. Body images of females are also presentable but it channelized marital status. If they have hourglass and slender physique they are more appreciated by the Pakistani society as it develops the positive marriage perspective by their appearances and body image. The body image of a girl relates with intelligence, smartness and stylishness that fulfill the culturally constructed physique and jobs requirements in Pakistani society. Gym going girls are also maintaining their status of positive body image with the use of beauty products including the use of cosmetics and hydra facial. They also use various multivitamins capsules oil directly on their face to gain attractive appearance.

It was also found that in Pakistani society, the adaptation of multivitamins by gym going youth can be viewed as a response to the difficulties posed by their hectic routines to manage their daily activities and stress level. The current study has found that gym going youth believe that using multivitamins can help them to achieve their desire body goals and better lifestyle. Gym going youth including males and females preferred to use various multivitamins supplements as a shortcut and convenient way to achieve their desired body image. Self-medication of multivitamins is not merely a health supplement among gym going youth but also a fashion and a trend symbol to gain the desire body image quickly that is in fashion in the society.

The sharing of personal experience among most gym going youth supports the idea that self-medication with multivitamins is a socially acceptable and common practice to achieve positive body image. It is concluded that gym going youth easily incorporate

different multivitamins and supplements to their daily routine as a shortcut and easy way to achieve their social and cultural constructed beauty standards.

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Annexure

Acronyms

NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
IHRSA	International Health, Racquet & Sports Club Association
IFBB	International Federation of Bodybuilders
BMI	Body Mass Index
TV	Television
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
OTC	Over the Counter
FGDs	Focus Group Discussion
WHO	World Health Organization

Glossary

<i>Bazu</i>	Arm
<i>Tango</i>	Legs
<i>Motti</i>	Fat
<i>Larkiyan</i>	Girls
<i>Patli</i>	Smart
<i>Motapa</i>	Obesity
<i>Samajdar</i>	Intelligent
<i>Bimariyon</i>	Diseases
<i>Shalwar</i>	Trouser
<i>Kameez</i>	Shirt
<i>Bachon</i>	Children
<i>Maa</i>	Mother
<i>Zalim</i>	Cruel
<i>Log</i>	People
<i>Banda</i>	Person
<i>Pakorras</i>	Fritter
<i>Ameer</i>	Rich
<i>Larka</i>	Boy
<i>Niraalay</i>	Strange
<i>Khoobsurati</i>	Beauty
<i>Pasand</i>	Like

<i>Toor</i>	Personality
<i>Khaliyan</i>	Cramps
<i>Jahan</i>	World
<i>Zehan</i>	Mind
<i>Sukoon</i>	Peace
<i>Phli</i>	First
<i>Mahool</i>	Environment
<i>Ghar</i>	Home
<i>Ghutno</i>	Knees
<i>Karich ki awaz</i>	Crackle sound
<i>Shok</i>	Fond
<i>Khelnay</i>	Play

Interview Guide

Name: _____

Age: _____

Occupation: _____

Marital Status: _____

Education: _____

Multivitamin Use: _____

1. What is the perception of youth about the multivitamins?

- 1.1. What is multivitamins? / How do you define multivitamins?
- 1.2. Do you use multivitamins?
- 1.3. What influences you to consume multivitamins?
- 1.4. What are your perspectives behind using multivitamins?
- 1.5. Why you take instant vitamins?
- 1.6. How you know that which vitamin is good for your health?
- 1.7. Do you have proper awareness about the supplement that you use?
- 1.8. Why you not fulfill your need of multivitamins through balanced food?
- 1.9. What factors forces you to join gym?
- 1.10. Do you think the use of multivitamins is necessary for gym people?
- 1.11. How do you replenish your vitamins and nutrients after exercise (sweating)?

2. What is the nature and extent of multivitamins among youth?

- 2.1. What type of vitamins you use?
- 2.2. Name the vitamins that you use?
- 2.3. What is the appropriate time to take multivitamins; is it pre-workout or post-workout?
- 2.4. How long do you use the multivitamins?
- 2.5. How many times a day do you take a dose?

- 2.6. How many multivitamins products do you take in a day?
- 2.7. To what extent do you rely on self-medication of multivitamins?
- 2.8. Do gym professionals guide you on how often you need to take multivitamins?
3. **What is the role of self-medication culture in the over use of multivitamins among youth?**
 - 3.1. Do you think your culture plays a role in using multivitamins as self-medication?
 - 3.2. Why you engage yourself with self-medication of multivitamins?
 - 3.3. Where did you find out about the vitamins you use?
 - 3.4. What inspires you to take control on your own health?
 - 3.5. How does the gym represent the use of multivitamins and a healthy lifestyle?
 - 3.6. How the prevailing knowledge system has influence your choice of use of multivitamins?
 - 3.7. Why the gym structures always recommend the use of multivitamins?
 - 3.8. Do experts of gym have professional knowledge about multivitamins?
 - 3.9. On which basics experts/professionals of gym are prescribing the multivitamins supplements to their customers?
 - 3.10. Have you get your desirable results after joining gym and using multivitamins?
4. **What is the relationship of youth between their lifestyle and the vitamins they intake?**
 - 4.1. How gym cultures influence your lifestyle?
 - 4.2. How long have you been coming to gym?
 - 4.3. What are your motives behind joining gym?
 - 4.4. Why dietary behaviors influence your intake of vitamins?
 - 4.5. How lifestyle work routine influences your intake of multivitamins?
 - 4.6. What is the role of body image in the use of multivitamins?
 - 4.7. What type of food you take before and after exercise?
 - 4.8. How you manage your lifestyle, taste and body aesthetic?
 - 4.9. Are you satisfied with your lifestyle after joining gym?
 - 4.10. Does your culture value your lifestyle and body aesthetic?
 - 4.11. In your perspective, how should the perfect male and female body look like?

- 4.12. Do you consume multivitamins for your bodybuilding?
- 4.13. Which vitamin you used for your bodybuilding?
- 4.14. Do gym and the use of multivitamins help you to achieve lifestyles that support health?
- 4.15. Do multivitamins help you to execute regular activities with optimal performance?

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